Church Concord:

CONTAINING,

I. A Diſſwaſive from unneceſſary Diviſion and Separation, and the Real Concord of the Moderate Independents with the Presbyterians, inſtanced in Ten ſeeming Differences.

II. The terms Neceſſary for Concord among all true Churches and Chriſtians.

The Firſt Part written 1655. The Second Part 1667. And Publiſhed this 1691. To ſecond a *late Agreement of the* London *Proteſtant Nonconformiſts:* And a former Treatiſe called [*The true and only terms of Church-Concord.*]

By RICHARD BAXTER.

Mat. 5. 9. *Bleſſed are the Peace-makers, for they ſhall be called the Children of God.*

1 Theſſ. 5. 12, 13. *We beſeech you, Brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you: and eſteem them very highly in Love for their Works ſake; and Be at Peace among your ſelves.*

Phil. 2. 1, 2, 3. *If there be any Conſolation in Chriſt, If any Comfort of Love, If any Fellowſhip of the Spirit, If any Bowels and Mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the ſame Love, being of one accord, of one Mind. Let nothing be done through ſtrife or vain-glory: but in lowlineſs of Mind let each eſteem other better than themſelves.*

1 Cor. 3. 1, 2, 3. *And I, Brethren, could not ſpeak to you as to ſpiritual but as to carnal, as to Babes in Chriſt.—For whereas there is among you envying and ſtrife, are ye not carnal and walk as men?*

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THE PREFACE.

§1. *I Owe ſome ſatisfactory account to the Reader, of the Reaſons of my Publiſhing this Book, which I have caſt by about Thirty four Years. It cannot be well underſtood, without the knowledge of the Caſe we were then in, and the Occaſion of my Writing it.*

The Miniſters of the Churches were then (as is uſual) of divers Opinions about Church-Government. 1. *Some men for our Dioceſane Epiſcopacy as ſtated by the Reformation.* 2. *Some were for a more Reformed Epiſcopacy, deſcribed by* Bucer *in* Script. Angl. 1. *Archbiſhop* Uſher, *&c.* 3. *Some were for Dioceſans in a higher ſtrain, as ſubject to a foreign Juriſdiction, and as parts of an Univerſal Church, Headed by a humane Head, the Pope being* Principium Unitatis. 4. *Some were for National and Claſſical Government by Presbyters only, without Biſhops.* 5. *And ſome were for a parity of Miniſters and Churches, without any ſuperior Biſhops, or Synods, or Governours; but to have every Congregation to have all Governing Power in their proper Paſtors.* 6. *And ſome were for each Congregation to be Governed by the Major Vote of the people; the Paſtor being but to gather and declare their Votes; Among all theſe, the* 3*d ſort, the* Foreigners *were utterly unreconcileable; and of the* 6*th we had no great hopes: But with the other four we attempted ſuch a meaſure of Agreements as might be uſeful in a looſe unſettled time, to keep up Chriſtian Love and ſo much Concord, as that our Differences ſhould not ſo much weaken us, as to fruſtrate all our Miniſterial Labours.*

§ 2. *To this end I attempted a double work of Concord in* Worceſter-ſhire: 1. *For the willing Miniſters Epiſcopal, Presbyterian and Independent to Aſſociate, in the Practice of ſo much of the Miniſterial Office, as they were agreed did belong to Presbyters:* II. *To Catechize or perſonally by Conference inſtruct, all the Families and capable Perſons in our Pariſhes, who would come to us, or admit us to come to them, in order at due appointed times.*

God gave our People, (in many Pariſhes) willing Minds, and encouraged us by unexpected great ſucceſs: The moſt laborious Miniſters took the hint, and ſeconded us in many Counties: Firſt and chiefly in Weſtmorland *and* Cumberland, *and then in* Dorſetſhire, Wiltſhire, Hampſhire *and* Eſſex, *(and Dr.* Winter, *and others in* Ireland): *The terms of our Aſſociation, the Reader may ſee Printed at large* 1653. *But theirs of* Weſtmorland *and* Cumberland *more large, and worthy the Conſideration of the preſent tolerated Churches. I pray you read them.*

§ 3. *But when it came to cloſeſt Practice, All the* Foreigners, *(*Prelatiſts*) and* Popular *called* Browniſts *kept off ſo but few of the rigid* Presbyterians *or* Independents *joyned with us ; (And indeed* Worceſterſhire *and the adjoyning Counties had but few of either ſort,) But the main Body of our Aſſociation were men that thought the* Epiſcopal, Presbyterians *and* Independents, *had each of them ſome good in which they excelled the other two Parties, and each of them ſome miſtakes: And that to ſelect out of all three the beſt part, and leave the worſt, was the moſt deſireable (and ancient) Form of Government. But that ſo much as might Unite them in the Comfortable Service of Chriſt was common to them all: The moſt of our Miniſters were Young men bred at the Univerſities during the Wars, and engaged in no Faction, nor ſtudied much in ſuch kind of Controverſies; but of ſolid Judgment and zealous Preachers, and eminently Prudent, Pious and Peaceable: And with them there joyned many that had Conformed, and thought both the Common-Prayer and the Directory, Epiſcopacy and Presbytery tolerable: And theſe in* 1660. *did Conform; but moſt of the reſt were ejected and ſilenced. Though of near Ten Thouſand that the Parliament left in poſſeſſion, there were but Two Thouſand caſt out by the Prelates, we ſtrongly conjectured before hand who thoſe would be: Satan deſired to have Power to ſift us, as wheat, And the* chaff *and the* bran *ſtayed in, and made that which ſome called the beſt in the World: And indeed much of the bran is honoured by us as very uſeful: But the* ſimila *was too fine and preciſe for the pallates of the Great Churchmen, and was caſt out in the ſifting: And the Sifters did but call the* [Similago] Simulatio *and ſuch other names, and out it went with Scorns and Deveſtation: And the hatred of it is propagated as the natural Progeny of revived true ſimulation and revenge. But though* fur-fur *be a name of no honourable* ſound *(*or ſence, *as it looks to* Brethren *and the* Church*) yet for my part I do with thanks for* England, *and with lamentation for other Lands, conſent with them that ſay,* Few Churches are ſo well fed: *God can uſe this for the* cleanſing *and* drying up *the Hydropical tympanite of this Land: And Chriſt, I hope, will* Remember *the* Penitent *part of them,* when he cometh in his Kingdom, *and they that rob'd others of their Civil and Church Rites, may yet* be with Chriſt in Paradiſe. Furfure pingueſcunt pulli ſi lacte madeſcat. *Even thoſe that read this Praiſe with diſpleaſure, taking Repentance for a Diſgrace, and being loth to think they need it, may yet by Grace repent and live. Through God's great Mercy the excuſſed* ſimila *hath been Childrens food, though the Milſtones have made it unfit for ſeed. But God will* aliunde *provide ſeed: Though we cannot but dread the abundance and maliguity of the Seminary Tares.*

§ 4. *But our trouble (next to the ignorance and badneſs that we found moſt Pariſhes in) was Antichurches, or Separatiſts, that in great Towns and where they found Entertainment, did gather Congregations out of the Parochial Congregations: which being gathered on pretence that the Communion of our Churches was unlawful, employed ſo much of their Preaching and converſe in labouring to prove it ſo, and in magnifying their own Opinions and ways, and vilifying others, as made many Towns become places of meer ſtrife, that I ſay not of almoſt hoſtility.*

§ 5.

§ 5. *These ſeparating Antichurches were of divers ſorts: But of theſe it was two Parties that moſt hindred our Concord and Succeſs. The Laudian Prelatiſts, and the rigid Independents: The former ſet up moſtly in Great mens Houſes, that had been againſt the Parliament; with whom they had the great advantage of the prejudice and exaſperation of Minds that had ſuffered with and for them; and of their Power over the People that as Tenants or Servants depended on them, and the Countenances of their greatneſs, and a comfortable and honourable entertainment with them. Theſe told the People that the Pariſh Miniſters were Schiſmaticks and but Lay men, (except the old ones that were ordained by Dioceſans.)*

The other ſort pretended ſometimes faultineſs in our Churches, as not ſo pure as they; and ſometime Liberty to gather the willing into Churches of their Conduct, becauſe Pariſh Bounds were not of Divine Right.

The Anabaptiſts alſo made us no ſmall trouble; But the Quakers that made the loudeſt noiſe, by railing at us in our Aſſemblies and Markets, did little harm, being contemned becauſe of the groſsneſs of their Behaviour: eſpecially when we had admitted them to publick Diſputes, and ſhamed them before all the People.

§ 6. *Our care was therefore to offer Love and Peace to the Laudians and the rigid Independents. To the firſt ſort, we offered to confine our Miniſtration to that which they had nothing againſt, though we could not do all that they thought beſt: we conſtantly uſed to read the Pſalms and Scripture Leſſons, ſome Hymns, the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Decalogue, &c. and offered them the Sacrament Kneeling that were capable and willing: And ſome of us permitted and maintained the bare Reading Curates that in Chapels read the Liturgy to them. And Petitioned that all intolerable Prieſts of what ſide ſoever might be removed for better; but that no man might be rejected for being for the King. But we ſpake to the Deaf; and ſought peace of the unpeaceable. We would have had them to ſet up tolerated Biſhops over all Volunteers that deſired it: But that they were utterly againſt, as thinking that the Party that would conſtitute their Churches would but ſhame them by their ignorance and vice, ſuch a Leaden Sword did they take their Diſcipline to be, laying all on the force of the Magiſtrates Sword, when yet the Keys, which they durſt not bear without the Sword (as it was done Three hundred Years) muſt have the Honour and Name.*

§ 7. *And as to the other Separatiſts, we treated with their chief Leaders for Union and Concord; and that occaſioned the Writing of this Book. But we little prevailed with the Old Conductors, or the young ſelf-conceited ſort of Novices. I will not diſhonour the Dead ſo far as to name them that I treated with, and the terms offered to them, and the pretences on which they by tergiverſation refuſed it. Their Confidence in the Soldiery that failed and ſhamed them, I think was it that hardened them into that Errour.*

And had not the Sword for a time upheld them, all theſe Sects had quickly come to nothing (as indeed moſt of them did) by the Parts, Intereſt and Concord of the United Miniſtry: For my own part I had little hinderance, nor any Antichurch nor ſtriving Party.

§ 8. *The*

§ 8. *The preſent Conformiſts I know will take occaſion to call our Congregations ſuch Antichurches now, as I wrote againſt then. And ſome on the other ſide will ſay,* What need was there now to publiſh your old Diſſwaſives from Separation: *I will ſpeak briefly to both theſe.*

§ 9. I. *I know none now that are ſo much againſt Schiſm and ſinful Separation, as the moderate Nonconformiſts; nor any more guilty of it than thoſe (Papiſts and Tories) that moſt fiercely talk againſt it. Had we not been greatly againſt Schiſm, we had never done and ſuffered ſo much as we have done to have prevented or healed it: and to have kept the Church from tearing Laws, and Canons that have battered Peace and Concord: we had never written and ſtoopt and humbly beg'd for Unity and Peace of malicious, ambitious, revengeful men, that made all our Endeavours fuel to increaſe the flames of their Cruelty. We foreſaw what the Legion was like to do, to make the Church and Land like the man among the Tombes, that ragingly cut and tore himſelf: But the cure is too hard for us. Is it lawful and good to ſhut the Churches Doors againſt us, and throw Stones at us to drive us away, and baniſh us five Miles from all the Churches of the Cities and Corporations of the Land, and all places where of long time we had Preached, and to order the Jailers to keep us from the Churches, and Informers to accuſe us if we come there; and then to call us Schiſmaticks for not coming: And is it Schiſm for men thus uſed, to worſhip God elſewhere?*

Is there no Separation that is a Duty, becauſe ſome Separation is a Sin? Is it Schiſm to ſeparate from Heathens or Infidels, or from the Papal Church, or from Arrians? The Caſe was not then as it hath been ſince: The ſeparating Party had nothing impoſed upon them, that they could themſelves ſay was againſt the Word of God. They had no Canons that excommunicated them ipſo facto, *if they ſhould call the Churches Practice ſinful. They were not caſt out for not declaring* Aſſent and Conſent to all things contained in and preſcribed by *Three Books of fallible Impoſers; They were not forced to Covenant* never to endeavour any alteration, (*that is,* Amendment of the preſent Church Government: *Nor to ſubſcribe that if a King ſhould* Commiſſion a French or Iriſh Army to invade the Land, to deliver it to a Foreign Prelate, *it is unlawful for the Land to reſiſt ſuch an Army. The Corporations of* England *were not then conſtituted, by means of an Oath, that* neither King, Lords, *or* any Perſon *have* any Obligation *to be againſt* Schiſm, Popery *or* Prophaneneſs, *or* to *repent* of Sin, *by Swearing and Vowing it, if that Oath hath a Confederacy alſo againſt the Engliſh Prelacy, and was impoſed and taken againſt Law. The Separatiſts that were againſt Biſhops, Liturgies and Ceremonies, were then at liberty to forbear them, and to diſown them. And what pretence had they then for Separation?*

§ 10. II. *But to the other ſide, I anſwer,* 1. *The Loud Accuſations of Schiſm or Separation publiſhed againſt us by ſuch as then did ſeparate themſelves from the Publick Churches, require us to undeceive thoſe that are deceived by them, by making them know our conſtant enmity to Schiſm; and that it is they that drive us away, and not we that are driven, that are the Schiſmaticks in* England, *as I proved in a Writing called* [A Search for the Schiſmatick,] *To humble them*

that

that are the Cauſe, it is ſtill neceſſary to ſhew the Evil of that Sin. It made not the Apoſtles Schiſmaticks, to be caſt out of the Synagogues; no, nor Paul *for ſeparating the Chriſtians from the blaſpheming Jews, into the meeting in* Tyrannus *School.*

2. *And the ſurviving of the Old Sectarian ſpirit of Diviſion, maketh it a Duty to ſhew ſtill the Evil of it: Some cannot endure to hear thoſe former Miſcarriages blamed, but by enmity to repentance make them their own, and encourage the Evil ſpirit of Diviſion: And ſome ſtill keep up the dividing Principle, of the Peoples Power of the Keys, and are ready to ſeparate from thoſe Paſtors that will not allow the whole Congregation to be Tryers or Judges of the State of all that are to be baptized or admitted to Communion.*

And if we never have more admiſſion into more publick allowance, the World ſhall ſee that it was not long of us: But if God have ſo much Mercy for this Land, as to ſtrengthen us by publick Concord, and unlock to us the Doors of the publick Churches, when I am dead, I would leave this Teſtimony againſt ſuch as ſhall then refuſe or reſiſt any lawful and deſirable Concord.

And as to my terms of Peace then offered to the Independents, I think it ſeaſonable now to publiſh them, when God in Mercy hath newly brought us to publiſh our Concord in a very hopeful and comfortable form and manner, to drive home the Nail, and to be a witneſs againſt them that yet will divide.

§ 11. *And becauſe both old and late Experience telleth me who thoſe be, though I have hereafter ſpoken to their Caſe, I will ſpeak again though I ſeem guilty of repetition.*

It is the raw ignorant flaſhy ſelf-conceited ſort of Reformers that we are in danger of, as to fruſtrate our Concord and Reformation. Such whether Miniſters or People have torn us, and continue ſo to do, and are like to do ſo ſtill.

Paul *knew what he ſaid, and why, when he told us a Biſhop muſt not be a* Novice, *(or a young raw Chriſtian) leſt being puft up with Pride, he fall into the Condemnation of the Devil. And* Act. 20. *Of your own ſelves ſhall men riſe ſpeaking perverſe things to draw away Diſciples after them. Ignorant unſtudyed Preachers, that attain to a laudable fervency in ſpeaking what they know meet with injudicious Hearers, that being of their own temper, diſcern not their Ignorance, but value their Zeal; and theſe grow up into dividing Parties and Churches, and cheriſh the Vices of each other, as if it were Wiſdom and holy Zeal.*

The great Dividing Errour of theſe People is UNRULINESS, 1 Theſſ. 5. 14. Warn them that are unruly] Tit. 1. 10. There are many unruly and vain talkers, *Jam.* 3. 8. Their tongues are an unruly evil]. *They take it for a Doctrine of Chriſt, that they ought not only to be* unruly, *but to be* Rulers *of the* Church, *and of their Rulers, and to uſurp a chief part of the Paſtors Office, to the Churches Confuſion and their own: They think that the Tryal of all that are received into the Church by Baptiſm, or to it's Communion in the Lord's Supper, and of all that are admoniſhed, ſuſpended, excommunicated or abſolved, belongeth to the Major Vote of the People: And where this is denied them, they will have no Peace.*

If

It's no time to palliate this miſchievous Errour. I reſolve here to deal plainly though briefly with the guilty, and therefore ask them,

§ 12. *Q.* 1. *If groſs Ignorance deſerve caſting out, do not you deſerve it that are ſo groſly ignorant, even in a Point ſo plain, and of ſuch practical moment?*

Q. 2. *Could you poſſibly be ſo proud as to think your ſelves capable of this, if you had ever had true Humility, or knowledge of your ſelves?*

Q. 3. *Do not you forfeit even the right of chooſing your Paſtors that know no better what a Paſtor is, and that to be your Rulers is eſſential to their office?*

Q. 4. *With what Eyes and Minds do you read the Scripture, that cannot there ſee, that you are commanded to* Obey them that have the Rule over you, for they watch for your Souls, as thoſe that muſt give account, that they may do it with joy and not grief, for that is unprofitable to you, *Heb.* 13. 17. & *v.* 7. Remember them which have the Rule over you; *who have ſpoken to you the Word of God. And v.* 24. *Salute all them that have the Rule over you,* 1 Tim. 3. 5. *A Biſhop muſt be one that Ruleth well his own Houſe, elſe how ſhall he take care of the Church of God. And (as the Steward of God.* Tit. 1. 7. *To give the Children their Meat in due ſeaſon,* 1 Theſſ. 5. 12, 13. *Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord,* &c. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. *Let a man ſo eſteem of us as of the Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the Myſteries of God: It's required of Stewards that a man be found faithful?*

Q. 5. *Do you know what the word* Paſtor *ſignifyeth? Do the Sheep Rule the Shepherd and themſelves?*

Q. 6. *The Paſtor being but one, and you, having the Major Vote, are you not his Rulers? And are you able to Rule him aright? Why do you not tell him what and whom to reprove,* &c.

Q. 7. *Is it not Sacrilege to uſurp a ſacred Office? Like* Uzzah's *incenſe, and* Corah's *ſin?*

Q. 8. *Who hath required this at your hands? Who gave you Commiſſion to Rule the Church?*

Q. 9. *Do you not tremble to think what a charge you uſurp, and what a dreadful account you undertake to give? Will you anſwer for all that are unmeetly Baptized, received to Communion, Excommunicated, Reſtored,* &c. *Do you not know that this is a greater and harder part of the Paſtors Office, than an hours Preaching (which a well furniſhed man can do in the way that you like with little or no ſtudy) If he muſt wholly attend this work, muſt not you do ſo, if you undertake it? Do you know what it is to try ſo many Mens and Womens Knowledge and Profeſſions and Lives, and to hear Witneſſes, and hear each perſons Plea for himſelf, and judge? Muſt you not leave your Trades for it, or be treacherous? Even all of you, becauſe the Major Vote muſt judge. O fearful Self-condemnation!*

Q. 10. *Do you not know how certainly this will turn Churches into Confuſion, and the ſcorn of the World? Will you all agree in your Texts? Or will not one think that perſon not holy enough, nor that profeſſion of converſion ſatisfactory, which another approveth?*

Q. 11.

Q. 11. *And where hath God given the Major Vote the Government of the Minor? If you can rest in a wrong judgment of the Usurping Majority, why not of the lawful Pastors?*

Q. 12. *Why would you chuse Pastors that be not wiser to govern than your selves?*

Q. 13. *Do you not visitate those Diocesans that take on them the sole Government of more Churches than they can govern: And do not you also undertake what you cannot do?*

Q. 14. *Do you think it is not lawful for a great Lord like* Abraham, *that hath a hundred or many hundred Servants, to make a Church of his Family? And do you think his Children and Servants should rule it by Vote, and try their Lord and Ladies graces?*

Q. 15. *Do you yet know that Baptism entereth into the Universal Church as such, and not into any particular Church without a further contract? And who made you Rulers of the Church Universal? why you rather than another Church. Did the People try and judge by Vote the Baptizing of the three thousand,* Act. 3. *and of* Cornelius, *and the Eunuch, and the Jailer, or the Samaritans, or any one person? Prove it if you can, and defie not God's Word.*

Q. 16. *What if the Minister that must Baptize and give the Lord's Supper be unsatisfied in your Judgment? Must he go against his Conscience in obedience to you?*

Q. 17. *Is one abused Text* [Tell, and hear the Church] *ignorantly repeated, enough to blind you against all this Evidence? If the King send to the City of* London *to cast out an ill Member, doth it follow that all the People must do it by equal Power or Vote, or some as Rulers, and others as obedient Consenters? your freedom and your choice of Rulers is not a Power to Rule. Papists and all Sects abuse this Text.*

§ 13. *Is not your Liberty to be governed only as consenting Volunteers enough for you, unless being many Masters you receive the greater condemnation,* Jam. 3. 1. *I would you would read the Third Chapter of* James *and the Fourth to the* Ephesians, *and the Second to the* Philippians, *on your Knees, begging of God to cause the Scales to fall from your Eyes, and to give you his Eye salve, that you may see that you are poor, and miserable, and blind and naked: When the greatest Millenaries say, This is spoken of the new* Jerusalem *in another World in Paradise, do not repine that I apply it to you.*

§ 14. *And that you may not be proud of your Church Liberty it self (not to be forced to Sacraments and Communion, Let me tell you, what it is. It is a Liberty to be sinful, disorderly and unhappy, resulting from that Necessity which God in Nature and Scripture hath founded, in that he will make no one happy without his voluntary consent: If you will you may renounce your Baptism, and your Childrens Church-Membership, and your own: you may after a first and second Admonition Excommunicate and condemn your selves, and renounce Communion with the Universal Church, and with Christ himself; you have liberty to forsake the Assemblies and Communion of the Church, and the help and conduct of true Pastors: you have liberty to forsake God, and to*

be damned: O woful liberty! God will not pardon, or save you against your wills: And Kings and Bishops should not force you to take a sealed Pardon, or any of the Childrens peculiar part without your voluntary consent. As much as you blindly cry down Freewill, I think you deny not, but men have a will free and able to Sin, and to choose Destruction, till Grace cure that freedom. And verily I think to such ignorant proud Dividers as you, it is but such a freedom to choose your own Teachers, where Christian Magistrates have more Wisdom to choose for you: Not much more than for Boys to choose their own Schoolmasters or Tutors, or Servants in a Great mans Family-Church, yea or Sons, to choose their Pastor. Your most desireable Liberty is to have wiser Governours and Choosers, and to have Wit, Humility and Grace to obey them. (But yet to be the discerning Judges of your Duty, and to do nothing against God's Law).

Q. 18. *I would know why you do not also your selves Baptize and Administer the Lord's Supper? Do you not know that the Ministerial Power of the Keys lyeth more in* judging decisively *who should receive these Sacraments, than in the actual delivering them. Do you not as the Lay Chancellours do by the Parish Ministers, make them but the Executioners of their Decrees: You must Judge, and your Pastors Execute, or as Cryers proclaim your Judgments.*

Q. 19. *When all the Church must try the Repentance or Conversion of a Sinner, must he open his Sin before you all? If not, you will take him I doubt for no true Penitent. If yea, then by what right can you make his secret Sins to be openly known. Auricular Confession is better than such: And if an aged Person for want of use be uncapable of handsom Expressions about Religion, must he be put to shame before you all? And as Mr.* Noyes *saith, Shall Lads thus uncover their Father's nakedness?*

Q. 20. *Are you sure that upon a wiser Examination than yours, most of this masterly Party would not be cast out themselves. In many things we offend all: And he that sheweth not his religious Wisdom out of a good Conversation by works of Meekness, but hath bitter envying and strifes, his glorying is all lying against the truth: Such Wisdom is not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devilish: For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.*

I would advise the Pastors of such masterly People, to try and examine these Tryers: I have given them a Catalogue of Questions for them at the end of my Reformed Pastor: *Try whether they can tell you, whether Christ hath one, or two, or three Natures? Whether he was Man before the World? In what Nature he made all things? How the Godhead and Manhood are one Person? Whether each be a part of Christ's Person? What the Soul is? How they will prove against an Infidel that Christ is the Son of God? and that Scripture is true? What the definition of Faith is? and of Justification, and of Regeneration? And the Covenant of Grace? whether it be the substance of the Holy Ghost that is given in to the Faithful, or only his Effects? An hundred such Questions, I doubt you will find them ignorant Answerers of. It's a sad case*

to

to have those try mens regeneration that know not what regeneration is. If you will abuse the Letter of the Text, the Women must Govern: Are not they of the Church? You'l say, They are forbid to speak. *Anſ.* That's as Teachers; but what's that to Judging? And are not you forbid to Rule, when you are commanded to OBEY?

The Church that muſt be Heard, is it that muſt be Told and Judge. But it is the Paſtors that muſt be Heard: For if all the People be the ſpeaking Reprovers, it will be a clamorous Church. And how without ſuch clamour can the multitude be heard? And muſt not all Diſſenters have leave to enter their Diſſent againſt the Major Vote. What if Twenty be of one Mind and Twenty one of another? Will one Voice ſatisfie the Conſciences of the reſt to acquieſce.

Q. 21. You build all this on the foundation of Rebellion againſt God and Governours; as if the People were the firſt receivers of ruling Power, and were by Nature made the Rulers (or Law-makers) by a Majority over the Minor part: which is ſo falſe, that as People they have no Ruling Power to Uſe or Give. All Power is of God, and none have it but by his Gift: And he never gave Power to the Children and Servants to Rule the Maſter of the Family; nor to the People to rule the Paſtor or Church, nor to the People to Rule the Juſtices or Judges, &c. God made Governours ſo early, as prevented the Peoples making them in the eſſential part of the office. It's enough that they chooſe him (in Caſes not Natural) that ſhall receive it from God.

But I wonder not that Browniſts and ignorant Sectaries receive this falſe Principle of the Bodies Ruling Power by a Major Vote, when even Archbiſhop Laud and Dr. Beveridge, yea, and judicious Richard Hooker, yea and many Papiſt and Proteſtant Authors of Politicks, and ſome Lawyers have publiſhed it: to the deceiving of the undiſtinguiſhing Ignorant, and the confounding of Societies, Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, and the robbing God of his Prerogative, and feigning all Government as a Muſhroom to ſpring out of the Earth, which cometh down from Heaven: Power is by deſcent from above.

Q. 22. I will ask you but this Queſtion more, Whether now the Brethren called Congregational, the moſt Able and Zealous have conſented to a form of Concord which excludeth the Peoples Government, can your Conſciences chuſe but accuſe you as proud, and Enemies of Concord, if as wiſer than all theſe you be ſo foolish as to continue the Diviſions.

And alſo when it's known that it was men of your Principles and Tempers that cauſed our former Confuſions, and pull'd down after the King, the Parliaments of all ſorts, the Protector and one another, till they ſet up their Quarters over the Gates, and pluckt up the Floodgates that have theſe Thirty years overwhelmed us, and hazarded all the Reformation: Is there after all this any excuſe for Dividers, or any pretence to extenuate their Sin? A Sin that hath coſt England, Holland, Germany, Poland, and many other Nations dear. Yea, a Sin that tore the very Apoſtolick Churches, and grieved the hearts of the Apoſtles, and cauſed them to record their vehement obteſtations againſt it. If there be any conſolation in Chriſt, if any fellowſhip of the Spirit, if any bowels

and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind: Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.]

Had you not been ignorant of Church History, but known what the Churches from the Apostles days till now, have suffered by an hundred sort of Sects and Heresies, and what the sinful effects of them have been, and what a Scandal they proved to the beholders, and how shamefully they all ended, you would have feared the very appearance of so direful an evil, and would not have cherished a worm of so many feet in your bowels, even that IGNORANT PRIDE *which hath caused all this.*

What is there in this odious Sin, and this contentious Church State, that should make men professing Godliness love it, and make the cure of it so hard. Is Ruling a work of ease? Is there nothing but Honour in it? Is it not dreadful to be accountable for the ill managing of it? Do you not reproach Pastors as dumb Dogs and treacherous, that neglect their Duty: Yea, and Kings and Magistrates if they miscarry? And are not you afraid of your account of a usurped mis-performed Government? Can you judge whether your Pastors understand the Gospel in the Language that the Holy Ghost hath given it in? and whether they rightly expound a thousand difficult Texts? and whether they decide Doctrinal Controversies truly or erroneously? Or do you not rather cry up men that are of your Opinion, be it right or wrong, and love those that are sick of your Disease, and tempt such ignorant Teachers to speak and do but which pleaseth the People, for fear of incurring their censure, and losing their maintenance. It grieveth me to hear that some are drawn so far to communion in the Peoples guilt, that they will reject from their Communion all that will communicate with the most Godly Conformists; And make Adversaries say, that the Question between us is, Whether Bishops or Women, *or at least ignorant* Voters, *should govern the Church. They say,* The publick Churches have Faults and Forms. *And have you no Faults? Had the first Church no Forms? Is not the whole Bible a form of words for Instruction and Prayer and Praise? Obj.* But they are God's Words. *Ans. Then God was for Forms. But your Bibles are all* Man's *words: Do you think that* Moses, *the Prophets, or Christ were Englishmen? Or was any of the Scripture written or spoken in English by them, or by the Apostles? Do you not take every word in your Bibles on trust from English Conformists, or such men? Is not Conformists (all save one) that made the Translation of the Bible which you use. The Papists say, It is a false Translation? How will you confute them, and prove that you have any Gospel or Word of God? And is not taking all your Bible as on the words on Trust from Conformists a greater degree of Communion with them, than receiving the Sacrament at their hands in form?*

I advise all sober Persons to be no Members of any such Church, as will engage them to have no Communion with any others, but to be as guilty of Separation as they are themselves.

I mean

I mean, that you make not or perform any such wicked Covenant or Condition of Communion with them, though their Leader should seem the most Zealous and Devout: To renounce Communion with all the Church of Christ, save such a Schismatical Sect, yea, or with all that have not purer Worship than our Liturgy, or that are not purer Churches, is a Sin so heinous, as should deter you from it. Though better be to be preferred, renounce not Communion with all that have not better, lest yours prove worse. Had not the Publick Churchmen been guilty of Schismatical Separation, calling men from all Churches and Worship save their own, and appropriating all Church Title and Communion to themselves, they had been more blameless than they are. But while some silence, and others separate, Concord is banished more and more.

And if the Imposing Party well consider this late Agreement, they will find that there is nothing in it that may make them think, that the same men will be averse, to any just terms of a further Agreement, with those that have been their Ejecters. They have agreed to take no Members out of any of your true Pastoral consenting Churches, without a just hearing and satisfactory Reasons to them. But I hope you take not all your Parishioners, even Atheists, Papists and Infidels for your Church Members: Nor yet all your Auditors and Catechumens, but only your Communicants. And is it not better that they be Members of Nonconformists Churches than of none? I have elsewhere cited you the Canons of a Council decreeing, That if the Bishop of the place convert not any Heathens or Unbelievers, and another convert them, they shall be his Flock that did convert them, (in my Hist. of Councils.)

Would they but first admit the Excluded to Publick Lectures where the Incumbent consenteth, it would prepare the way for further Concord. The Great Reconciler will in due time reconcile and closely Unite his own. Amen.

Apr. 11. 1692.

Ri. Baxter.

To

To the UNITED

Proteſtant Nonconformiſts

IN

LONDON.

THough I was, by the Confinement of decrepit Age, and Pain, hindred from having any part, in the Form or Contract of your Agreement, I think it my Duty to ſignifie my Sence of what you have done, and by the Publication of my old Endeavours of that Kind, to promote the Execution. I greatly rejoyce in your *very Attempt*: That God exciteth you to a practical deſire of ſpeedy healing our pernicious, ſhameful Striſes: Much more that you have ſo Skilfully made the preſent Plaiſter for the Wound: No man doth any thing ſo well, but it might be better done: You muſt look that it ſhould be aſſaulted by Cavil and Reproach: Thoſe that theſe Thirty Years have denied you Brotherly Communion with them, will be loth you ſhould be thought to have any Union among your ſelves: And the Potent Schiſmaticks that to divert the Infamy from themſelves, have Stigmatized you with their own Name, will be loth that your Concord ſhould confute them: while you offer your Reaſons to prove that what they make *neceſſary terms* of *Miniſtration* and *Communion*, would be *to you* if obeyed (not medling *with them*) no leſs than [deliberate Covenanted Perjury or Lying and renunciation of repentance and amendment of Church-Corruptions, and of the Law of Nature and Nations, and the Kingdoms Self-defence;] they muſt ſtretch their Wits, and gift of Tongue, to make all this ſeem but a melancholy or feigned Fear, and that it is but things indifferent that you refuſe: As they call me Antiepiſcopal, and *againſt the Church*, becauſe I would have more Biſhops over a Thouſand or many Hundred Churches than One, and would have as many hands to do the work, at leaſt as are neceſſary to the Hundredth part of it; and would have more Churches in a Dioceſs than one, and would have Incumbents to be Paſtors and Rectors: But dreaming Men that build Cities, or Travel in their Sleep, can build more or go further in an hour (ſpecially if they lye ſoft in a Univerſity or a Great man's Houſe, than a waking Man can do in a Year

Year or in his Life. My own Judgment of Epiſcopacy and Church Conſtitution I have oft Publiſhed, and you may ſee it in *Laſcitius* and *Commenius* Books of the *Bohemian Waldenſes* Church-Government.

Brethren, I hope you fix not your Bounds of Pacification, in the words or limits of this Form of Concord, with a *ne plus ultra*. Either (when I am dead) the Publick Church Doors will be unlock'd to your lawful Communion or not: If yea, it will be ſo great a Mercy, that the Proſpect of a *Poſſibility* of it, will juſtifie my Publiſhing my old Reaſons againſt unneceſſary Antichurches, or Militant contentious Gatherings; But if God have not ſo much Mercy for this Land, but that the Doors be lock'd up againſt deſired Concord, or *Venient Romani*, our Foreign Juriſdiction men will prevail to deliver up the Land to a pretended Univerſal Foreign Power, and make all believe that it is Treaſon to reſiſt either a French or Iriſh Army, if they be but Commiſſioned to perform it; Then your Concord with ſuch as are not Enemies to Peace, will be a comfortable help to your patient Sufferings, and may keep up ſome ſparks of the Reformed Religion from being utterly extinguiſhed: And while you dwell in the Secret of the moſt High, you may lodge under the ſhadow of the Almighty: And may enter into your Chambers, and ſhut the Doors on you, for a little moment till the indignation be over-paſt; and God be known by the Judgments which he executeth, when the wicked are inſnared in the work of their own hands. Thus praying God to ſave you from violating the Concord you conſent to, and from being perverted by the ignorant Dividing ſort of Teachers or People, and that you will ſtudy Mr. *Meade*'s Reaſons againſt Diviſion, well and ſeaſonably urged, I bid you Farewel.

Your Quondam *Fellow-Labourer*,

London, April 23.
1691.

Ri. Baxter.

The

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The

Chap. I. *The Neceſſity of Concord.*

THE Judgments of all wiſe and ſober men muſt needs diſallow both the *Practice of Diviſion* and unwarrantable Separation from the Churches of Chriſt, and the common Liberty for Gathering Churches out of Churches now pleaded for, and too much practiſed by many; and alſo the *Occaſioning of Diviſions* and Separations by over rigorous proceedings with tender Conſciences, and impoſition of unneceſſary things, and too much ſeverity againſt thoſe that through infirmity are guilty of ſome culpable Diviſions and Uncharitableneſs. For it's not this Oil that will quench theſe flames.

In order to the *healing* of our *dangerous Diviſions*, I think it meet to deliver my thoughts in the enſuing Method. 1. To ſhew the Evil of our Diviſions, and of the common practice of Private Separated Churches, where in Publick there are able, godly, faithful Miniſters, and ſuch Publick Churches as may lawfully be owned: For I meddle with no other caſe. 2. To ſhew what the agreeing Publick Miniſters ſhould do on their parts for the prevention and cure of theſe Diſtractions. 3. To give you the true ſtate of the Differences that have occaſioned them. 4. To propound thoſe Terms by which a ſafe Reconciliation may be made. 5. To which I ſhould add (if it were not for being thought too bold or confident) the Magiſtrates Duty, both in order to our Agreement, and in caſe we will not be agreed.

1. Though I take not a Private Meeting, or a Tolerated Private Church for ſo odious a thing in it ſelf conſidered as ſome do, but confeſs that ſuch may be Good or Evil, as the *Cauſe* of the Aſſemblies, — the Aſpect of the Times, and other Circumſtances and Accidents ſhall make them, and doubt not but there may be warrantable Separations from one of many particular Churches, where the blame may lie upon the Churches, and the Private Aſſemblies ſometimes may be more juſtifiable than the allowed Publick ones; yet as unneceſſary Separations and Diviſions are a great tranſgreſſion; ſo what the Aggravations of that tranſgreſſion are, and what wrong the Cauſe of God receives from the Differences among the godly themſelves, and the Divided and Private Congregations that are gathered by occaſion of theſe differences, in many parts of *England*, I ſhall briefly ſhew.

1. When in one and the ſame Pariſhes (the boundaries of the ordinary Churches, as to habitation) there ſhall be divers Churches, one Publick, and one Private, it will ordinarily cauſe great Diſaffection and Contention among the Chriſtians of that place: There will be Paſtor againſt Paſtor, and People againſt People; and one will be accuſing another according to their ſeveral apprehenſions, and making the waies, and conſequently the perſons of each other

to be odious or unacceptable to others: And hereby Christian Love will be much quenched, and Unity and Concord much overthrown, and all the Effects of Love abated, and the odious remnants of Uncharitableness, Malice and Emulations will revive. Too common and sad experience puts this out of doubt. Alas! what Factious Doctrine, for Parties and against Parties are usually managed in Publick and Private, where these Divisions once appear? What unconscionable Censures pass too often on one side or both? What bitter unchristian taunts and scorns, and reproachful words? When publick Writings so abound with these, and the Press is become the common scold, and the most unchristian Language is spoken so familiarly to all the Land, and uncharitableness and fury are afraid of being concealed, no wonder if in private among those that are pleased with such discourse, the Preacher sit in the Scorners Chair.

2. Uncharitableness and Divisions, are as plainly, urgently and frequently prohibited, and condemned in the Word of God, as almost any sins that are: And Love and Unity, Peace and Concord are prest as much as any Duty of Man to Man. Certainly these Great Obligations are such as smaller matters cannot dispense with. And wonderful it is, that so many thousand, that abhor the Popes dispensing with Oaths and Promises, and Subjects Duties, and with some of the positive commands of God, can yet without remorse of Conscience so easily, so long, so confidently dispense with the greatest Duties of Man towards Man, even with Charity it self, and the effects of Charity. He that must owe nothing else, must owe Love, *Rom.* 13. 8. Love is the fulfilling of the Law. *Verse* 10. Every Commandment of the Second Table is briefly fulfilled in Loving our Neighbours as our selves. *Verse* 9. Yea he loveth not God that loveth not his Brother. 1 *John* 4. 21. Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God: He that loveth not, knoweth not God: For God is Love. 1 *John* 4. 7, 8. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us. *Verse* 12. God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. *Verse* 16. If any Man say, I love God and hateth his Brother, he is a Liar: For he that Loveth not his Brother whom he hath seen, how can he Love God whom he hath not seen? And this Commandment have we from him, that he that Loveth God, Love his Brother also. *Verse* 20, 21. Every one that Loveth him that begat, Loveth him that is begotten also. 1 *John* 5. 1. We know that we have passed from Death to Life because we Love the Brethren: He that Loveth not his Brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his Brother is a Murderer, and you know that no Murderer hath Eternal Life abiding in him. 1 *John* 3. 14, 15. Yea we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren. *Verse* 16. This is the New and frequently urged Command of Christ, that we Love one another. *John* 13. 34. and 15. 12, 17. *Gal.* 5. 14. *Jam.* 2. 8. This is it that we must provoke each other to. *Heb.* 10. 24. and that must continue. *Heb.* 13. 1. We must Love one another with a pure Heart fervently. 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. Yea by Love we must serve one another.

Gal.

Gal. 5. 13. And *Paul* took this to be so Essential to our Sanctification that he tells the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thes.* 4. 9. that [as touching Brotherly Love, he need not write to them, for they were taught of God to love one another.] And can that be the way of God that dispenseth with so Essential a part of Holiness, or that secretly and unobservedly extinguisheth this holy Love! Let Experience teach you, whether the present way of private separated Churches, be not the opening a Shop, or Forge, for Military Engines against each other? And under pretence of defending Truth, whether they be not the Nurseries of uncharitable Wars among the Servants of the Lord?

And then as Love is extinguished, so the sinful fruits of the contrary Vice do by such Divisions prosper and abound! And what weekly Bills of heinous sins might we see, that are committed on these occasions, if all the envious, slanderous, censorious, and other uncharitable words were open to our view that many that profess the fear of God, are frequently guilty of. It is a sad condition that tempteth Christians to so much Sin, and quieteth their Consciences in it, as if their horrid iniquity were their piety; and that bringeth too many separated Churches under some such reputation as Alehouses are fain into (I speak it not in contempt but lamentation) which are taken to be lawful, but places where so much Sin is committed, that it is a suspicious sign for a Man to be oft seen in them, especially near home. As Swearing and Excess of Drink are the ordinary sins of Alehouses, so Church dividing, Censorious, Envious words, with more that I shall anon mention, are the too common Sins of these Dividing Congregations.

And then as Love, so Unity and Concord is importunately urged on us in the holy Scriptures, and the contrary condemned. O read and study that prayer of Christ, that his Servants may be *One*, *John* 17. 11, 21, 22, 23. how high he drives it, and how much he insisteth on it. His Church was then most spiritual and pure, when it had the greatest Unity, *Act.* 2. 1. [*They were all with One accord in One place*] when the Holy Ghost did fall upon them! *Act.* 2. 42. [They continued stedfast in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, and breaking of Bread and Prayer] *verse* 44. [All that believed were together (yea and by the power of Love, though not by Levelling destruction of Propriety) had all things common.] *Vers.* 46. [They continued daily with one accord in the Temple—] *Act.* 4. 31, 32. They were together [praying when the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost: And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul.] So *Act.* 5. 12. Many great faults we find had tainted the Church of the *Corinthians*, the *Galatians*, and too many more; when yet we find not that any Separated Churches were gathered by the godly, for the avoiding these corruptions (nor that I remember, on any other occasion.) No where do I read in the same Precincts or Cities, of any Churches separated from the first Churches, but only the Societies of Hereticks, that are so much reprehended and branded with Infamy by the Spirit of God. Not one that ever I could find of the true Believers, did take this to be his duty: Name any Church that was separated from a former Church in

Scripture, and held divided Assemblies in the same Precincts, and was approved by the Lord. I find Divisions *in* the Churches too many; some saying, I am of *Paul*, and some, I am of *Apollo*; but I find none but those condemned of Heresie, that divided *from* the Churches. Separation from the World was the practice of the Churches; but separation from the Churches was the practice of Hereticks only, as far as I remember; or those that are charged with Schism at least; though I remember not that meer Schism then rose so high. They that had the Apostles among them could not easily fall to such a Crime, till they fell from the Apostles. And far were the Apostles when they reprehended the Corruptions of the Churches, from perswading Men to separate from them. (Though it's possible for such a case to be, when that may be a Duty, yet all those faults enumerated by *Paul*, did not make it so.) But contrarily they charge them not to forsake the Assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some (the Hereticks) was. *Heb.* 10. 25. and [beseech them by the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ to speak all the same thing, and that there be no Divisions among them; but that they be perfectly joined together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment. 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. 11. [That they be all of one Mind, having Compassion one of another, loving as Brethren, being pitiful and courteous, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing, &c.] 1 *Pet.* 3. 8, 9. O how constant, and how earnest were the Apostles in these Exhortations, and in answerable Prayers to God. *Phil.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. [If there be therefore any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies, fulfil ye my Joy, (and what was *Paul's* so much desired Joy?) That ye be like minded, having the same Love, being of one Accord, of one mind: Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves: Look not every one on his own things, but every Man also on the things of others.] *Rom.* 15. 5, 6. [Now the God of Patience and Consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one Mind, and one Mouth glorifie God. *Rom.* 16. 17. Now I beseech you Brethren mark them which cause Divisions and Offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them: For they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own Bellies, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the Hearts of the simple.] So 1 *Thes.* 5. 12, 13. Study. *Jam.* 3. throughout.

Abundance of such passages are before us in the Word, which tell us that this Great and Necessary command of Love and Unity, is not to be dispensed with, nor Divisions among Christians to be accounted small things. And shall men professing the fear of God, go against such a stream of Holy Precepts? And be sensible of a Swearers or a Drunkards Sin, and not of so great a course of Sin of their own?

3. The Nature of Gods Graces in his Servants Souls is contrary to a way of Separation and Division: As Fire would to Fire, and Water to Water, so would Christian to Christian: Grace is sociable, and abhors Division as well

as

is Nature. Wounding is not its Delight. Love is an Eſſential part of the New Man. The living Members rejoyce together, and ſuffer together, and be not eaſily ſet againſt each other; but it's hurt to all that's hurt to one.

4. Divided Churches are the Seminaries of Private dividing Principles; As they proceed from ſuch Principles, ſo do they cheriſh and increaſe them. They eſpouſe an Intereſt that's contrary to Catholicism and Chriſtian Concord; and therefore we find that they make it much of their Buſineſs to propagate it. Whatever Opinion drew from the Communion of the Church, muſt be there pleaded for againſt the Peace of the Church. And to have a Mutineer in the Army of our Lord is bad; but to have Schools and Nurſeries of Mutineers diſperſed through the Land, and favoured by Godly Men, is far worſe.

5. And certainly ſo far to forſake the Catholick Principles and Intereſt, and be ſo void of a Catholick Spirit and Love, as to ſet a part againſt the whole, or a ſmaller part againſt the Profit of the main part of Chriſt's Body, is a thing much unlike the Chriſtian Nature, and unbeſeeming a ſenſible Member of Chriſt. With what hearts do ſuch dividing Brethren read all thoſe paſſages of Scripture that ſpeak of the Unity of the Catholick Church? We have all one End, one Hope, one Law. [There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one Hope of our Calling: one Lord, one Faith, one Baptiſm (one Baptiſmal Covenanting with God) *Eph.* 4. 4, 5, 6. one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in us all; therefore muſt we endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace] *ver.* 3. [For as the Body is one and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body being many, are one Body: ſo alſo is Chriſt: For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body—] 1 *Cor.* 12. 12, 13. And the Spirit and Miniſtry are given to this one Body, [for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt, till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt, that we henceforth be no more Children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the ſleight of men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lye in wait to deceive; but ſpeaking the truth in Love, may grow up in him, in all things, which is the Head, even Chriſt; from whom the whole Body fitly joyned together and compacted by that which every joynt ſupplieth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part, maketh increaſe of the Body to the edifying of it ſelf in Love.] *Eph.* 4. 12, 13 14, 15. Note here the Unity of the Catholick Body, and who is the Center of the Church, and in what way it proſpereth to perfection? and all will tell you of Unity in Chriſt, and Communion of the ſeveral parts in Love. [God hath tempered the Body together, having given more abundant honour to that part that lacked, that there ſhould be no Schiſm in the Body, but that the Members ſhould have the ſame care one for another: and whether one Member ſuffer, all the Members ſuffer with it, or one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoyce with it: Now ye are the Body of Chriſt and Members in particular, 1 *Cor.* 12. 24, 25, 26, 27.

O how much the Nature and Unity of the Church Universal, even the Body of Christ, is forgotten by most men, that withdraw into separated Assemblies upon those grounds and terms, as condemn or cast off most of the Universal Church of Christ.

And how do they look upon the face of the World, if indeed they know what state it is in, and hath been in, when they can find in their hearts to keep up our Divisions? (of which more anon).

6. Moreover our Divisions and Separations do much destroy the Power of Godliness: partly as is said, by destroying Love and all the Operations of Love, wherein it principally consisteth; and partly by diverting Professors of Religion from Practical Doctrine, Conference and Meditation, and filling them with Fancies and Opinions and Passions. So that when once in a Town there is Church against Church, and Pastor against Pastor, almost all (or too much) of their time is taken up in wrangling and contending and making their Cause good against each other; and they strive not to overcome each other by Meekness, Patience and Love: It is the raising of an Ecclesiastick War through all the Quarters of the Land! And few thrive by these Wars above any Wars. Mark whether Holiness, Love and Heavenliness appear as much in their Families and Lives, where this War is raised, and Fire kindled, as it did before.

7. Moreover, it keepeth out too often a Saving work of Grace, and turns off many that were coming on, and crusheth fair hopes too often in the bud. Many a Minister hath rejoyced in the Hopes of a Conversion which seemed to be begun, on the younger sort especially of his Hearers: And when they have seemed to be somewhat humbled, changed, resolved for a Holy Life, suddenly some Divider or other layeth hold on them, and turneth the stream of their Thoughts and Zeal, upon *Opinions* and *barren Controversies*, and spoileth our hopes of the work of Grace, and formeth them up into Contentious Hypocrites. And alas how apt are such separated Assemblies to tempt men to this miserable case? even as Ale-houses are to make men Drunk. Sober men may be there, but there's the Nursery of Opinionative Religion.

8. But there is no effect so grievous to my thoughts, as the common hardening of the ungodly. Who sees not how it makes them think unbelievingly or contemptuously of all Religion, when they see so many Churches and ways, and hear them so condemn each other, they think they may warrantably condemn them all, and say as bad by them, or speak as contemptuously of them as they do of each other. They think they are as well already, as turning to such a divided People can make them? And when they think of turning, the Tempter asketh them, as the Papists use to do, Which Party will you turn to? Why rather to this, than all the rest?] What a readiness did I see to entertain the way of Godliness presently after the Wars in many places, that had before been under the Power that most reproacht it! Till they saw us by the Ears among our selves, and see us fall into so many Parties, and then they turned their reverence into contempt.

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Let no man fly to God's Decrees here, and say, that [Offences must be, and Hereſies muſt ariſe that the approved may be manifeſted, and that the Elect cannot be deceived to Perdition.] For Sin is Sin, and Miſery for all this: They may on theſe Grounds as well let Phyſicians have leave to give men Poiſon, or any man to ſet our Towns on fire, becauſe nothing can be done againſt God's Decrees? It is as true among the Indians and Turks, that the Elect cannot be deceived to Perdition, and that God knoweth who are his, as here: and yet I hope all Chriſtians will lament the Sin and Miſery of the World of Infidels, and Idolaters, and pray and endeavour (as far as they can) their recovery by the Goſpel: We muſt fetch no ſuch Concluſions from any Decrees of God, as ſhall hinder from praying that his Name may be Hallowed, his Kingdom come, and his Will be done in the Earth as it is in Heaven: Such as may encourage us to dig Pits for the Blind, and caſt ſuch ſtumbling blocks in their way, and be Servants to the Tempter and Enemy of Souls in hindering them from Salvation. And what can we to hinder them more, than to bring the Churches and Holy Worſhip and Ways of God into doubt or contempt among them?

9. Our Diviſions make us and the Cauſe of God to be our Adverſaries Reproach, and his Name is evil ſpoken of among them through us. They have taken it up as their common Argument to draw men to Popery, (and now at laſt to Infidelity), that we are a *Babel* of Confuſion, and have no Unity among us, and they point to our ſeveral Parties, and aſk men, How they know that this is in the right more than all the reſt? and why he will cleave rather to one of them than to another? Can a tender Conſcience, and one that regardeth the intereſt of Chriſt, forbear to mourn while the Name of God is daily reproached, and his Servants made the Song of Drunkards, the Scorn of Papiſts and all their Adverſaries, and the By-word of the Prophane, by our Diviſions?

10. Theſe Diviſions and Antichurches do hinder the Holy Order and Diſcipline of Families, when the Husband is of one Church and the Wife of another, or the Parents of one, and the Children of another; or the Maſter of one and the Servants of another; or one Child and Servant of one Church and another of another? This hindereth the Governours from ſeeing effectually that their Families be ſoundly inſtructed, and kept from Hereſies, or neglect of Ordinances: It hindereth them from taking a due account of their Children and Servants of what they learn: It divideth Families, and inducth the Children and Servants to refuſe to joyn in Family-Prayer and other Duties with their Parents and Maſters, and to refuſe to hear them repeat thoſe Sermons, which they refuſed to hear from the Miniſter himſelf: And it turneth the Holy Converſe, and charitable Communion of Families, into perverſe Contendings about their ſeveral ways.

11. And theſe ſeparated Churches do much hinder the Labours of the Miniſters of Chriſt, and the true Reformation of the Churches. It grieveth the Souls of Faithful Paſtors, to ſee that their Children, or thoſe that they hope have ſomewhat of Chriſt in them, ſhall be the Inſtruments of Satan to hinder

their

their Labours; and it grievously weakeneth the Builders hands when they are thus opposed by those for whom they have spent themselves, and in whom they should have Comfort after their Travels, and from whom they should have help for the promoting of their work with others; Drunkards and Swearers in some places, hinder not the Ministers work so much as Antichurches, that make it their work to draw men to themselves, and to that end do find themselves engaged to speak against the Publick Church and Ministry, and to that End to quarrel with or reproach the Doctrine or Worship there performed. And how can these Ministers reform their Churches, that are forsaken (yea and opposed) by so many of those that should be the Materials of their Churches, and should be their strength against the Prophane, and help them in Reforming, and in the exercise of Discipline? It making Discipline it self (on both parts) also to be of almost no Effect, when he that is cast out of one Church can presently step into another, and perhaps under pretence of greater Holiness, and there reject those that rejected him, and seem more innocent than they.

12. These private separated Churches also do give great advantage to the secret Enemies of the Truth, and Corrupters of Sound Doctrine, to creep in and sow the Tares of Heresies among poor Christians that have no Pastor at hand to contradict Deceivers. And most of the horrid Errours of these times, that have poysoned Souls, dishonoured God, divided us and disturb'd our Peace, have crept in at these back Doors: Few have made their Entrance at the Publick Assemblies, in comparison of those that have come in at private Meetings. And here it is that Papists and other Adversaries have opportunity to Play their Games, and to lay their Trains of Gun-Powder to blow up both Church and State, without the *Odium* of being Traitors and Powder-Plotters, yea, by the Countenance and Favour of the State. It will not secure us, that Papists are excepted from Liberty among us, as long as a Vizir, or another Name, and some Equivocation shall be to them a Patent for Liberty and Toleration.

13. Moreover, our Separations tend to the grievous Pollution of the Ordinances of God, by setting up prophane Persons as Ministers, and encouraging prophane Administrations, and Societies, and so dishonouring the Christian Name, and hardening the Ignorant and Ungodly by these means. For when those that are most Zealous against Prophaneness are withdrawn, and leave the ignorant careless People to themselves, they will have Ministers like themselves (if such are tolerated) and they will make up such Churches as are uncapable of Discipline, and will go on as smoothly in the Abuse of Sacraments, and the Praises of God and all Holy Ordinances, as if they were the only Christians in the Land, and theirs the only regular Churches, and none but Sectaries differed from them. Or if they were not allowed the Publick holding of Undisciplined Churches, and prophanation of Holy Ordinances, yet as long as all may have what private Assemblies they please, they will there at least have their Ignorant unworthy Ministers to fit all their Humours, and there they

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will Prophane the Name and Holy things of God. And O what abundance of provoking Sin will be committed in *England* every Week, and this through the Separations of Pious Persons, and the toleration of the State, as for their Indulgence? Do we make Laws against the Prophanation of the Holy Name of God, by Swearing and Cursing? and shall men fearing God let loose, (yea further) the Rabble of the Ungodly through the Land, in the Prophaning of the same Name, and Holy Ordinances, and the Office of the Ministery, under a pretence of Worship? The case of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, and the *Bethshemites* and *Uzza*, do tell us, that God is more jealous about his Holy Things, than in our common Affairs.

14. Moreover, It is an actual Reproaching of all our Solemn Assemblies, to separate from them; as if you openly proclaimed them to be such, that an honest man may not lawfully hold Communion with. Whereas the Interest of Christ is so great among them, so much of his acceptable Worship, and so many of his faithful beloved ones are there, that he will not take such usage well. If we must needs have private separated Assemblies, let the Servants of Christ so close together, that the Ungodly and not they may be the separated part, and may be driven into Corners: Let the Holy ordered Assemblies of the Saints be the Publick Assemblies, and let not the ungoverned have that honour.

15. It is an unspeakable Mischief of these Antichurches and Divisions, that they are the great impediment to *Universal Communion* of all the Servants of Christ in the Land: which is a work of great Necessity to the common good, and exceeding desirable to all Christians. Were we but one, *One Body* by some common Bond and Communion, our Rulers would quickly be resolved in the Point of Toleration, Heresies might be easier extinguished, and Prophaneness might through all the Land lye under such Discouragement as might much abate it; whilest every where the unanimous Servants of the Lord did keep out all the obstinate Impenitent Persons from the Publick Communion; and he that is cast out of one Church is cast out of all; and none in any Country would entertain him: Whereas now they have ordinarily a room in the most Publick Assemblies, or if one Church reject them, when they travail into other Parts, they are as acceptable as others: and so Communicatory Letters are made useless. But the Principal thing that I here intend is, that excellent Security of the Gospel and Godliness to our Posterity, and the welfare of the Nation that might be happily promoted by this Unity: For then the Church and Commonwealth might be so complicate and commensurate as would be the Strength and Glory of them both: They may hold in Life, but never attain that stability and Glory that God hath propounded to them, and given them means for, till (for the generality) the Members of the Church and the Free- to
men of the Commonwealth are the same: (I say not [the Subjects] but [the Freemen] that is, those that shall be capable of Governing or electing Governors.) Then will not the Interest of Church and State be set in Opposition against each other, nor Rulers keep up sinful jealousies against the Gospel and

 Ministers

Ministers of Christ, then will the Magistrate support and second the Ministry and Church, and the Ministers and Church be the faithfullest obeyers and defenders of the Magistrate: And then we shall not need to fear when one Parliament hath made us wholsom Laws, and own'd the Gospel, lest a majority of malignant impious Choosers should give us another that will undo all, and cast out the chief Blessing and Glory of the Land. Were Church and Commonwealth but duly commensurate (as aforesaid) then sober men, and faithful to the interest of Christ would choose our Parliaments, and so a Succession of Righteous Governours might be secured to the Land! A Mercy of inestimable Value, that would advance *Britain* yet much higher above any Nation under Heaven! And what clear Reasons could I give for this, and how easily could I answer all considerable Objections, and how easily might it be quickly put in execution, if it were not for this one most lamentable Evil, even the unreconciled Parties, and the undisciplined Churches and Antichurches among us? Till then, we hold our precious Mercies on such slippery terms, as should awaken all honest men to look after a better Security: God can make Wolves befriend his Lambs, and the Serpentine brood that are haters of Piety to choose Pious Governours: But Wonders of Mercy are fitter for a grateful remembrance, than for secure Expectations, when we wilfully cause our peril.

16. And it is an aggravation of the Sin of these Dividing ways, that they are continued in such a time and place as this! When men have nothing forced on them that they were wont to complain of; and nothing wanting but what they have such more than ordinary helps to procure in the Publick Churches. Formerly it was the Prelacy, and Liturgy and Ceremonies that by the Separatists was pretended as a justifying Cause of their Separation: (And yet then the ancient Nonconformists themselves did write against them more than any did): But now they can pretend no such things as these: Who forceth any thing upon their Consciences, which the tenderest Conscience of understanding People hath cause to refuse? And if Discipline be wanting, they have much encouragement to endeavour and hope for a supply: If the Ministers be bad, they may cast them out: We all desire it: If they be faithful, they will be willing to go as far as they can in the exercise of Discipline: and it is the discouragements, Divisions, and withdrawings of those that should help them that doth much disable them.

And it seems to me a great Aggravation that usually this Sin is the fruit of so many other Sins! How oft is it brought forth by a proud over-valuing of mens own Opinions, Parts and Piety? and by uncharitable censoriousness of others, and a vilifying extenuation of all that is good in them! And how ordinarily doth it bring forth disobedience, murmuring, and disdain of those that were their Teachers? and evil speaking against the things that they understand not? And too commonly it proceeds from lazines! When they will not be at the trouble and cost of doing their parts to reform the Churches where they are, they will lazily separate, to save them a labour: It is a harder work and requireth much more Self-denyal to joyn in the admonishing of the several Ungodly Persons

sons in the Churches, and follow it in God's way till they are reclaimed or cast out, than to get in private among a few that will put us to no such trouble. I see not but these Persons while they cry up Discipline, would destroy it. As some on one extream refuse to exercise it, so these on the other extream will be Members only of such Societies when they shall have little or no use for it, and consequently exclude it, or at least where it shall not cost them much. Lay this together, and consider whether in such times as these, when Godly Magistrates are ready to encourage us, and Godly Ministers willing to do what they can in Reformation, and no burdens are forced on their Consciences, and we refuse not their Communion that differ from us in tolerable Points, that yet in these times men will fly from our Assemblies, and set up Antichurches as they do! Alas, what pievish Children are in the Family of God. One part now separate into private Churches, because we have not Prelacy, Liturgy and Ceremonies; and another part separate, even when they are cast out, because they be not pleased in all things, that look to the other Extream! Doubtless the Separatists in our days of Reformation and Liberty, are much more unexcusable, than they were in the times of Ceremonies and Violence. What! cannot all the Endeavours of Magistrates and Ministers by such a Reformation, that many others think too much, yet sweep the Churches clean enough for you to enter? In other Ages it was the affliction of the Godly to be cast out of the Church by evil Governours: But now how many do cast out themselves? The Jews persecuted the Disciples by casting them out of their Synagogues, *Joh.* 16. 2. and 12. 42. And will you cast out your selves from the true Churches of Christ? And that from such Principles, and with such concomitant aggravating faults as those forementioned?

17. And it is an aggravation of this Sin that it is continued against so much and long Experience. Have we not long found by Experience how it quencheth Charity, and hindereth the Gospel, and cherisheth Errors, and causeth the rest of the forementioned Evils? And shall we love it, when we have found it Evil?

18. And it is no small aggravation of this Sin, to consider what *England* is, and what all the rest of the World is at this day, and what it hath been from the beginning until now: Had it not been the greater Sin to have separated from the Jewish Church (much worse than English Congregations) when all the rest of the World were Aliens, and much further from God than they? Five Parts of the World are Idolatrous Heathens, and Mahometans: A Sixth part only make any Profession of the Christian Name: Not a quarter (I think) of that Sixth part are Protestants: How ignorant and rude the Eastern and Southern Churches are, is lamentable to relate: Few of them have any Preaching, but only Homilies and Liturgies read. What the Papists are I need not tell you. Not the Twentieth part of the World are [illegible]nts: And among these, alas, how few have so much of the life of [illegible] among them as the meaner sort of our English Congregations? And hath God called this spot of Earth, this narrow Island, a corner of the World, to honour

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with the greateſt luſtre of the Goſpel, and true Reformation and Godlineſs? and yet will theſe men withdraw from the Publick Churches here, as if no Publick Church on Earth (but the few of their way) were worthy of their preſence: Are they no more thankful for *England*'s ſingular Privileges? nor no more humbly ſenſible of their own unworthineſs? And would they ſeparate from all the Publick Churches almoſt in the World?

19. Theſe continued Diviſions among our ſelves are a great diſcouragement to our higheſt Rulers from ſeeking the healing of the Churches abroad. The greateſt Service they can do to God, is to reconcile the Churches, and bring them to Agreement, and ſtrengthen them thereby againſt their Adverſaries. And all good men deſire this of them, that they would improve their intereſt to this end. But alas, with what heart can they ſet upon it, as long as they are unable to reconcile and unite the beſt of the Subjects here at home; It was the Grecians Jeſt upon a great man among them, that he went about to reconcile all the Princes and States of *Greece*, and could not reconcile his Wife and her Maid that lived unquietly at home. And do not we prepare ſuch Entertainment for our Governours attempts in ſo good a Work?

20. Laſtly, I heartily deſire that our Diviſions and Antichurches may not prepare renewed Wars, and Calamities to the Commonwealth. Certainly the Body of the Nation is much diſaffected to them: And I wiſh that for their ſakes they grow not diſaffected to the Government, and ready for Enterprizes that beſeem them not. But I much more fear, leſt animoſities among the ſeveral Parties ſhould make them buſie and bold in their Enterprizes againſt each other, and ſtill ſeeking opportunities to oppreſs one another, and to advance themſelves. And leſt the ſeveral Parties be to their Prince, like the many Wives that ſome of the Jews had to their Husbands, that were ſtill jealous of his Affections, leſt he loved this or that Wife better than the reſt: Every one looketh to be moſt eſteemed. And jealouſie is apt to break its bounds. But I will not Prognoſticate, but forewarn: If Unity be our Strength, and Diviſion our Deſtruction, let us pity the calamitous Church, and not ſet fire on the Common-wealth. And let all Chriſtians (that are ſuch indeed) lament our diſtances, and lay to heart the Sin and Calamity of our long Diviſions; and at laſt let Catholick Principles and Affections be entertained by us, and let us pray, and ſtudy, and ſeek, and ſubmit and deny our ſelves for the Unity of Chriſtians, and the Churches Peace.

For my part I have ſpoken much of this from certain Experience: The Evils of Diviſions and Antichurches I have ſeen abroad: The Eaſe and Comfort of Unity and Peace I enjoy at home! O what a Mercy is it to me, and the poor Flock that Chriſt hath committed to my Charge; what a help to my Labours and to their Souls, that we have not Miniſter againſt Miniſter, nor Church againſt Church, nor any ſeparating Parties to enſnare men, but that we Serve the Lord as to Heart and Soul, one Mind and Mouth. If I can procure the Ceaſe of this Mercy no further, I will compaſſionate the Church, and rejoyce in it at home.

Chap. II.

THE Second part of my Task I shall briefly dispatch, which is, to shew what is incumbent on the Pastors of the Church, for the prevention of such Separations, or their increase. Having spoken the most that I think necessary of this, in the end of my *Catholick Key*, Part 2. I shall refer the Reader thither for the Rules of the Churches Peace, and the terms on which they must be put in execution. I shall only here reassume these few particulars, suitable to our case.

1. If we would prevent our Peoples Separations, we must not make the door of the Church so narrow as to shut out the faithful, though infirm. If we keep them out, we cannot for shame chide them for not coming in. The principal thing that here we must avoid, is large and particular Professions of Faith, containing Controvertible Opinions, and Points that many true Believers are unsatisfied in; and also the imposing of unnecessary Ceremonies. The Holy Ghost hath decided this difficulty to our hands, and left it us as a standing Rule, *Rom.* 14. 1. That we must receive even him that is weak in the Faith, but not to doubtful Disputations. And that we must [be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus, and therefore receive one another as Christ also received us, to the Glory of God.] *Rom.* 15. 6, 7. Men must be called to no Profession but of Points plainly contained in the Holy Scriptures, and the ancient simplicity must recover us to the ancient Charity and Unity: And though more knowledge be necessary to the Pastors than to all the Flock, yet must the Scripture sufficiency be maintained, and necessary things distinguished from unnecessary, and those that are necessary to the being of the Ministry, from those that are necessary but to the Better being; and nothing should be imposed on Pastors themselves as necessary to the Communion of Churches, but Points that indeed are necessary to such Communion, and those (if possible) in Scripture phrase.

But because Hereticks will subscribe to Scripture and to ancient Creeds, and simple Confessions of Faith, therefore many have thought that other kind of Confessions must be made which they cannot subscribe to: But by that course the mischief of Heresie is not so much avoided, as the mischief of Divisions caused; and all because the right way of obviating Heresies is mistaken and overlookt. Heresie in the *Mind* is cured only by Doctrine, and is not it that we have here to obviate; but Heresie in the *Mouth* must be corrected by *Discipline*; and it is not a better Rule or Law than Scripture for them to Subscribe that is the Remedy, but a careful Execution of that Law against them, 1. By casting them out of our Communion after a first and second admonition, when they are proved guilty, and 2. By the Magistrates restraining them according to the quality of their offence. He that hath a Conscience to Subscribe to all the Scriptures,

Scriptures, and yet contradict them by his Hereſie, may do ſo by any Form that you can impoſe on him, that hath any appearance of fitneſs to be ſo impoſed. We muſt not make new Laws, every time the old ones are miſinterpreted or broken.

Our great danger in *England* is of Popery, above any thing except Impiety it ſelf. And the ſtrength and upſhot of all the Papiſts arguings, is [*Where was your Religion and Church before* Luther?] which by their Expoſition is, [Where was your Thirty Nine Articles, or your Aſſemblies Confeſſion, or any Church that Succeſſively from the Apoſtles held them.] This is their all, (which indeed is nothing.) LET US OWN AS THE RULE OF OUR RELIGION BUT THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, AND EXPRESS OUR BELIEF IN SCRIPTURE PHRASE, (without diſtorting it to look towards any Heretical or Erroneous Senſe,) AND THEN WE MAY EASILY TELL A PAPIST WHERE OUR RELIGION AND CHURCH WAS BEFORE *LUTHER*; [yea the ſimpleſt Women, that underſtand but what Chriſtianity is, may thus be able to defend their Religion againſt the Cavils of theſe Learned Adverſaries: Let us not therefore give away ſo great an advantage, and withal divide the Church of God, by departing from the ſufficiency of the Scripture, when it is the principal point wherein a Proteſtant differeth from a Papiſt, and that wherein we unanimouſly oppoſe them.

II. If we would avoid *Separations*, we muſt keep up holy Diſcipline, and not leave the Churches ſo polluted by the abundance of impenitent impious Perſons as may frighten tender Conſciences from us: Diſcipline that is pleaded for muſt be faithfully practiſed. We muſt not ſtep out of the way of God by unjuſt rigor to pleaſe any Men, nor to avoid their offence; but we muſt caſt out thoſe that ſhould not be in the Church, the rather, leſt thoſe withdraw that ſhould be in: And herein a principal part of our Care muſt be, to ſet Godly people a-work upon their own Duty, in a loving, humble admoniſhing of Offenders, that we may convince them how ſinful a courſe it is to expect that Men ſhould be caſt out, before they have been dealt with on the Terms, and by the degrees that Chriſt hath appointed; and to run away from the Church becauſe they will not do their Duties.

III. To this end that our Churches may be capable of Diſcipline, the Duty of Confirmation, muſt be ſo far reſtored, and faithfully practiſed, that none may be admitted into the Number of Adult Members for the Communion proper to ſuch, till they have made a credible Profeſſion of their Faith and Repentance, and renewed their Baptiſmal Covenant, (conſenting to the State and Duty of Church Members, if they are ſtated in a particular Church) and ſo are Approved by the Paſtors of the Church. Without this Diſcipline cannot be exerciſed, as I have ſhewed in a Treatiſe for *Confirmation*.

IV. Laſtly, if we will prevent Antichurches and Separations, Miniſters muſt be ſtudious, that they may be able to confound Gainſayers, and then they muſt be holy, harmleſs, humble, ſelf-denying, charitable, manifeſting

tender

tender Love to all that they deal with, prudent, and very vigilant and industrious, thinking no cost or pains too great for their so great ends. Because we have neglected these four necessary things, Separations have afflicted us.

Chap. III. *Difference* I.

THE third part of my task is, to state the Controversies that occasion our present Divisions in *England*: There are (besides intolerable Hereticks, as Seekers, Quakers, &c.) but three Parties that I remember that trouble us much with unjust Separations and Antichurches. The first is that new Prelatical Party that unchurch our Churches, and nullifie our Ministry, and Ministerial Performances; and draw into private Meetings, supposing that only Laymen or Schismaticks with whom they must not Communicate, (because they are not Ordained by English Prelates) have possession of the publick Churches. To these I have spoken in my Disputation of Church Government, and therefore shall say nothing here.

The Second Sort of Separatists are those called Anabaptists, that deny Communion with our Churches, supposing us to be unbaptized: To these I shall speak by themselves in the Offer of an Agreement. The Difference is sufficiently made known.

The Third Sort are those that of old were peculiarly named *Separatists*, together with some of those that are now called *Congregational* or *Independents*, who withdraw upon some Differences in Points of Discipline, which Differences it shall now be my work to state: And because I would be brief, I will annex the Accommodations to the Differences.

I. The first Point of Difference, which I think is no Difference, and yet is it that indeed makes almost all the Difference, is *about the necessary Qualification of Church Members*. That this makes almost all our Difference (except what disowned neglects of Discipline, and other such faults among us occasion) is known to us by experience, who hear the Members of the private Churches alledge this as the principal Point of Difference, for our accusation and their own justification, that we take those for Godly that they take not for such. That Doctrinally here is no difference between the Parties, but what is between the Persons in the same Parties, is in their words apparent. The Independents say that the Members of the Church must be [visible Saints.] The Presbyterians deny it not. The Presbyterians say that Sincerity or real Sanctity is not of Necessity to Visible Church Members: The Independents say so to, and no wonder; for else the Visible Church would not be Visible, nor could any Man be known to be a Member, because we know not their Sincerity or real Holiness.

Master *Norton Resp. ad Apollon.* p. 7. 11, 12. thus fully openeth their mind;

mind; that [All and only those *Competentes* that are Ecclesiastically are *Bona fide* Believers, and walk orderly are the next matter of a Visible Church and to be admitted.] By *Ecclesiastically Believers* he tells us that he meaneth [such as are faithful in the judgment of the Church, or such as towards whom whether they are positively faithful or not, we are bound to carry our selves in common Church Duties as if they were faithful.] To this he takes these four things necessary. [1. A Confession of the Fundamentals, and other points of Religion, which are of necessity to avoid a scandalous Life. 2. Such a declaration of the Experimental work of Faith which contains the substance of Conversion, though it may be counterfeit. 3. A Conversation not scandalous. 4. A testified Subjection to the Gospel of Christ, and his Government.]

There is nothing in all this but what the Presbyterians consent to, with these Explications, which we doubt not but will be allowed. 1. That this excludeth not the Infants of Believers from being Infant Members of the Church without these Qualifications in their Persons. 2. That if Infant Members grow up and claim a place among the Adult, it will then be meet that all this be done by them. 3. But yet that it's one thing to admit them into the number of the Adult Members of the Church Universal, (as the Eunuch, *Act.* 8. and others were by Baptism,) and another thing to admit them into a particular Church also. And that the consent to Christianity is it that is necessary to the first, and the consent to the Duty of a particular Member in that Church, is necessary only to the Second, (which supposeth also the First) 4. That there is great difference between a Baptized Person that needs but Confirmation or Repentance, and a Converted Infidel, that's to be Baptized: It is meet to have some Testimony of the Life of the former, because he is in Covenant already: But the Life of the latter is not to be supposed to be upright, but ungodly, and therefore we may not require of him a Testimony of his upright Life, but a Confession and Lamentation of his ungodly Life, with a Consent and Resolution for new Obedience: Upon this much the Apostles Baptized their Converts, without delay to try their Lives. 5. And there's difference

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See *Rutherford* Peaceable Plea, p. 92. &c.

Noyes Temple Measured, p. 62, 63, 64, 65, 66. excellently disputeth this Point. Of the Judgment of all sorts of Protestant Divines on this, see my Dispute of Right to Sacraments.

Twisse Vind. Grat. l. 3. Er. 8. § 6. p. 77. Agnosco libenter: Fidelis dici minime mirentur, apud illos, quotquot fucatam ipsorum professionem pertrunt dignoscere.]

Gillespit Aar. Rod. p. 514. I believe no Conscientious Minister, would adventure to Baptize one who hath manifest and infallible Signs of Unregeneration. Sure we cannot be answerable to God if we should Minister Baptism to a Man whose Works and Words do manifestly declare him to be an Unregenerated Unconverted Person. And if we may not initiate such a one, how shall we bring him to the Lords Table?

Thes. Salmur, Vol. 3. *p.* 59 *Th.* 39. [*Sacramenta non conferuntur nisi iis qui vel fidem habent, vel saltem tam pie se gerunt, adeo ut nullis certis argumentis compertum esse possit eam esse simulatam.*]

Rutherford Due Right, p. 231. [Such (as are ignorant of the first Rudiments and Foundation of Religion) are materially not of the Visible Church, and have not a Profession, and are to be taught; and if they willfully remain in that darkness are to be cast out.

difference to be put between what is neceſſary *ad eſſe, & ad bene eſſe: Neceſſitate medii & præcepti.* And the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, that is, of preſent Faith and Repentance, and this by any tolerable intimation or ſignification, is all that is neceſſary to the *Being* of ſuch Adult Members: And that the Teſtimony of his good life is only neceſſary (when it may be ſought) to the performance of our Duty, and the purity of the Church. If we admit a Man of another Countrey without Teſtimony or Tryal, upon his meer profeſſion, or if we do ſo through haſte, or negligence, or multitude of Perſons that we have to deal with in populous places, this doth not nullifie his Memberſhip: Nor yet if we admit him upon a dark and leſs expreſs Confeſſion. And, 6. It is a Mans *Profeſſion* that is his Title-condition to Viſible Memberſhip; and his Life is but a Confirmation of that; and where there is not opportunity of enquiring after Mens Lives, it is ſufficient even in point of Duty, that we receive his Profeſſion, if no Man will bring witneſs of a Life ſo vicious as may invalidate that Profeſſion. 7. And I think we may take it for granted that Mr. *Norton*'s Second demand of [a Declaration of the Experimental work of Faith, or ſubſtance of Converſion] is ſatisfied in the Profeſſion of Faith and Repentance, or in our renewing our Baptiſmal Covenant: For doubtleſs all the ſubſtance of Converſion is contained in theſe: He that profeſſeth that he believeth in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, renouncing the Fleſh, the World, and the Devil, or that he believeth and repenteth, and is willing to live a holy Life, doth profeſs Converſion.

The Sum of all is this, which we are agreed in: [*A Credible Profeſſion of Chriſtianity*, that is, of Faith and Repentance, or of Holineſs,] is that which is the Title-condition to our Memberſhip in the Church Univerſal, and its Priviledges: And [A Credible profeſſion of Conſent to be a Member of this particular Church] added to the former is the condition of our Right to admittance into ſuch a Church. And a careful Paſtor will and ſhould conſider how Mens lives do anſwer their profeſſion: But if nothing be brought from the Life to invalidate it, the profeſſion it ſelf muſt be accepted: And therefore if no ſuch Omiſſions or Commiſſions are proved againſt the perſon that deſireth our Communion as are of ſufficient weight to prove that the perſons profeſſion is *Incredible*, it is to be received, becauſe every Man is ſuppoſed to be better acquainted with his own Heart, than the Church is or can be: And every Man is to be ſuppoſed *Credible* till he can be proved *Incredible* by Evidences that *in foro Eccleſiæ* are ſatisfactory: Eſpecially when Men have to do with a Heart-ſearching God, and their Everlaſting Life or Death lyeth at the ſtake, and when the holy Life that they engage themſelves to live, is ſo contrary to Fleſh and Blood, and ſeldom are there times ſo good, in which it is not reproached at leaſt by the ungodly, we have reaſon *ſide humanâ* to believe Mens profeſſion in ſuch a caſe. And as God will have Mens Salvation or Damnation lye more upon their own choice, than upon any other Mans, ſo is it his wiſe and gracious Order, that their Church Mercies or Judgments, their ſtanding in the Church or being out of it, ſhall lye more upon their *own Chuſing*

or Refusing than on the Churches or any others: And therefore if Men dissemble in their profession, the Church is blameless, and it is themselves that bear the blame and suffering: And so if they keep out themselves, or force the Church by their Impenitency to cast them out. But if the Church should keep out Men that would come in, that *do not wilfully refuse God's Terms*, these persons would lay the blame on the Church, and say, *Lord, I would fain have entred, but could not be received.*

Let any Man read Mr. *Norton*, and such others, and he will allow me to conclude, that *de lege* in this point we are agreed, even in two words, that [*A Credible Profession*] is the Condition or Qualification requisite in the Adult.

Yea and we are agreed also what are the Qualifications that must make a profession *Credible*: *Viz.* that it be (or seem to us to be) tolerably *Understanding, Deliberate, Free or Voluntary, Serious*, and *not Invalidate* by contradictory words or practice, sufficiently proved. And for the matter of it, we are agreed, that it must be a profession of all the *Essentials of Christianity*, and that it must be a *Consent to present* and not only to a distant future holiness. Even as a promise to become a Husband or Wife to another a Month hence, is not Marriage, but a promise of Marriage.

We are agreed also that Extremes in the *Execution of this Rule*, must be cautelously avoided. As on one side, that we do not take that to be a profession that is none, and that we take not that for *Credible* that is *Incredible*; and that we take not that for *Understood* that is not tolerably understood, or that for *deliberate, voluntary or serious* that is not so, or appeareth not so: And that we be not careless when it may be done, in inquiring how Men have kept their *Baptismal Covenant*, and what their Lives are, before we *Confirm* them, or Approve them for the Communion of the Adult: And that we refuse not to hear what just exceptions can be brought against them: Lest we frustrate Church Order and Ordinances, and nullifie Discipline, and pollute the Church. And on the other side we are (in the Doctrine) agreed, that Hypocrites will be in the Visible Church, and that we must not refuse those that have the least knowledge of the Essentials, though they are not able in the Congregation to express it, nor privately in any but broken and unhandsom words; and that withal make the most imperfect *Credible Profession of Faith* and Repentance, and Resolution for Obedience: And that we must not break the bruised Reed, nor reject the least of the Lambs of Christ, but receive them that are weak in the Faith, and not of our own Heads reject any persons *Profession* as *Incredible*, without sufficient Reasons for such a judgment of it.

Indeed there is abundance of difference in these points, but 1. It is in the *Judgment of particular Persons and Cases*, and not in the *Law or Rule* of our *Proceedings*. And 2. It is a difference between *Persons*, and not between *Parties*: Some of the Congregational way are more rigid than many of the Presbyterians, in *Judging* who are *Credible Professors*, and who not: Some

will hear the Reports of a change, when moſt Presbyterians, will be ſatisfied with the profeſsion of Holineſs, though it have grown up with the perſon from his Infancy, and he knew of no change: Some look for ſuch Evidence from a Holy Life, as may it ſelf directly ſuffice to ingenerate in the Church a perſuaſion that the perſon hath Saving Grace, and ſo they make the Life to be *Teſtimonium primarium, vel primario æquale*: When moſt Presbyterians take the *Profeſsion* for the *Primary Teſtimony*, or condition of *Right*; and ſo receive it directly as *Credible*, by ſuch a Humane Faith, as one Man Credits another by in all Civil Tranſactions in the World: And they look at the Life but as a *Secondary Teſtimony*, which may *Confirm* or *Invalidate* the former: Though after Church entrance, the Life is directly looked after in the Diſcipline of the Church. But this difference is between Men of the ſame parties; Independents differ from Independents, and Presbyterians from Preſbyterians; and perhaps a hundred Men of the ſame Congregational way, may moſt of them gradually differ from each other in the ſtrictneſs or laxneſs of their *Executions*, as one is more or leſs Charitable than another, or more or leſs Tender, Compaſsionate, Strict, or Rigid, Cenſorious, or Remiſs, *&c.* which may occaſion difference.

I conclude therefore that about the great diſturbing point, *viz.* The Matter of the Church or Qualification neceſſary to Members, Presbyterians and Independents, differ not Doctrinally (though practically perſons of each party differ among themſelves;) and therefore that here is No Need of a Reconciliation.

Chap. IV. *Difference* II.

THE ſecond Point ſuppoſed to be a Difference, is about the Neceſſity of a Church Covenant. Here is no Difference at all between the Learned of each Party, that I am able to diſcover. We are Agreed, 1. That our conſent to the Covenant of Grace is it that makes us Chriſtians, and ſo Members of the Univerſal Church; and the Profeſsion of that Conſent (which regularly is to be done in Baptiſm, Parents profeſsing their Conſent for their Infants benefit; and the Adult profeſsing their own Conſent, doth inſtate them in their Viſible Membership, 1. The baptized Perſon being *Offered* to *God*, and ſo ſolemnizing his own *Covenant* Act; and God by his *Miniſter* accepting him into his Church.

2. And

Norton Reſp. P. 28. 3. *De Privatis talis Eccleſiæ te nomini dubitare peccatum dicimus. Q. 3. Quale fœdus ſufficit ad formam Eccleſiæ? R. Pactus implicitum ſufficit ad eſſe: fœdus explicitum ad magis ordinatum eſſe deſideratur.*

Rutherford Plea, *Pag.* 85. 86. An explicite Vocal Covenant whereby we bind our ſelves —— by entring in a new Relation to ſuch a Paſtor, and to ſuch a Flock, we deny not, as if the thing were unlawful——Nor deny we that at the Election of a Paſtor, the Paſtor and People tye themſelves by reciprocation of Oaths to each other; the one to fulfil faithfully the Miniſtry he hath received

of the Lord; the other to submit to his Ministry in the Lord: — 5. Any Professor removing from one Congregation to another, and so coming under a new Relation to such a Church, or such a Ministry, is in a tacite and virtual Covenant to discharge himself in all the Duties of a Member of that Congregation. —

2. And we are Agreed that a *signified Consent* is necessary to Membership in a particular Church: that is, A Consent to the Relation of a Member; which includeth a Consent to the necessary Duties of that Relation, and an acceptance of the Benefits.

3. And we are Agreed that any tolerable signification of this Consent is all that is absolutely necessary. And that an expres Church Covenant is not necessary to the Being of a Church or Member: but that one that by actual Submission and Communion hath signified his Consent, may be truly a Member.

4. And yet we are Agreed, (becaus *Ignorantis non est Consensus*, and for many other weighty Reasons, expressed in my Book of Confirmation) that where we can require and procure it, without a greater accidental Detriment to the Church, it is needful *ad bene esse* to the Churches Reformation, and to the Persons firmer engagement, to the satisfaction of others, and the due execution of Discipline, *&c.* that the Consent be as open and expres as may be: As nothing is more necessary, excellent, honourable, reasonable, than a Holy Life, and nothing that les feareth the light than the Cause of God, so he would have his Cause to be openly owned, and managed above board, and would be confessed before men, and have all men know what they do, that take him for their Master. It is an honour to God and the Gospel, and an excellent advantage to the ordering of the Church, and the saving of the People, to have all brought to as serious and solemn an Engagement to the Living God, as conveniently can be procured. I doubt not but the Presbyterians would joyn with their Brethren, to Petition the Soveraign Rulers that all our People may be brought to this. Let no man think so uncharitably of them, as if they desired that Christ should be but darkly and implicitely owned by the Churches, and as if they would not have Church Members know what they do; Doubtless they cannot but be sensible how much it would further their Ministry with the People, if Magistracy would but assist them herein against the stubbornes of ignorant and wilful men; that men might be compelled to submit to Instruction and Approbation, and make a credible Profession of Christianity, owning their Baptismal Covenant, and by this engage themselves to submit to the Officers, Discipline and Ordinances of Christ, in the Churches where they desire Communion. The thing that the Presbyterians have stood upon is no more, but to vindicate the Truth of our Churches against Separatists, that have denyed them to be true Churches, becaus they had not an explicite Covenant. They deny not that such a Covenant may conduce much to the well-being of the Church; especially if we have the Magistrates help to take off the Peoples prejudice.

Note here also, that by [a Covenant] we mean nothing but [expres Consent] and that [expres Consent] is indeed [a Covenant]. And that by [an Implicite

Implicite Covenant] we mean but [a Conſent that is leſs expreſs] and not [that is not expreſt at all]: For Conſent cannot be known to the Church without ſome Expreſſion.

I conclude therefore, that (whatever ſome particular perſons may be guilty of) there is no real difference between the Presbyterians and Independents in the Point of a Church Covenant: and therefore here is no work for a Reconciler.

God forbid that any faithful Miniſters of Chriſt ſhould fight againſt that much which is profitable to the well being of the Church, meerly becauſe without it the Church may have a *Being*. Then muſt we Plead for hunger and want and calamitous Diſeaſes that leave us but the *being* of men. Nature and the Scripture Preſidents in the Old Teſtament, and the Doctrine of the Apoſtles, and ancient Practice of the Churches, do ſatisfie us of the uſefulneſs of Holy Covenants, prudently, ſeaſonably and ſeriouſly made. Of this I have ſaid more in my Treatiſe of Confirmation.

Chap. V. *Difference* III. *Of the Extent of a particular Church.*

THE third Point wherein they ſeem to differ, is about the Extent of a particular Political Church, *viz.* Whether it be a ſingle Congregation, or divers Congregations? Whether the *Eccleſia Prima* or a particular Church of the firſt Generation, as diſtinct from a Combination of Churches, ſhould be no more than can meet in One place, and hold perſonal Communion in the Worſhip of God? Here is an appearance of ſome difference, but really none that will find a Reconciler work. Some Presbyterians diſtinguiſh indeed between a Worſhipping Church, and a Governed Church: and they would have a ſingle Congregation to be one Worſhipping Church, but many conjoyned in their Paſtors to be the firſt or loweſt Governing Church. But that is but in caſes of neceſſity, when there are not Elders enough in the ſingle Worſhipping Church. So that really both Parties are agreed, 1. That a particular Church may conſiſt of One ſingle Congregation if it be but furniſhed with more than one Elder for the work of Government. (Though for my own part I am quite out of doubt that where one man only is the Paſtor or Governour of a Church, that man only may Govern that Church, and do the work of a Paſtor to that Church.) 2. And they are agreed,

Norton. *Illius Eccleſiæ conſtitutio quæ uno in loco ordinario ad cultum Dei celebrandum convenire requeat (ob ſuam multitudinem) eſt illegitima, non tamen quoad ejus Eſſentiam ſed quoad adjunctam cumpoſitatis. Rutherford* Due. Right, *Pag.* 301, 302. [1. The ordinary Power of Juriſdiction becauſe of neareſt Vicinity and Contiguity of Members is given by Jeſus Chriſt to one Congregation in an Iſle. 1. Becauſe that Church is a Church properly ſo called.—A Congregation is a Church wanting nothing of the Being and Eſſence of a Church. Yet is it in compleat *Lond. Miniſt. Jus Div. Miniſt.* Part 2. *P.* 82. [Theſe Angels were Congregational, not Dioceſane. *Ib.* The Aſian Angels were not Dioceſane Biſhops, but Congregational Presbyters ſeated each of them in One Church, not any of them in more than One.

See Mr. *Hooker's* Conceſſion of many Meetings in one Church, in Mr. *Cawdry's* Review, *P.* 148.

that a Church that doth not or cannot ordinarily meet in one place, may yet be a true particular Church.

In times of Perſecution when the Church dare not publickly appear, or hath no capacious Rooms to meet in, but are forced to meet diſperſedly in Houſes, it may not only be lawful but moſt convenient, for ſome that meet in one Houſe and ſome in another, and ſome in a third, a fourth, a fifth, to be all united in the ſame Paſtors, that ſhall viſit them ſeverally as they ſee cauſe and have opportunity, and rule them all. And in a well ordered Church there is none denyeth, but that in leſs Publick Meetings the Church may be diſtributed into ſeveral Houſes: and that the Aged, Sick or Lame, or any that by diſtance cannot frequently come to the ſame moſt Publick Meeting, may yet have Chappels of Eaſe, or be allowed to meet in Houſes rather than not at all: This all agree in. And I think few Presbyterians, if any, will deny, that it is moſt convenient, regular, and ſuitable to the Ends of a particular Church, (which is Perſonal Communion in Worſhip, and Holy Order) that where it can be procured, the whole Church (except the Sick or Lame, or neceſſarily hindered) may frequently, if not moſt uſually meet in one Aſſembly. So that either here is no work for a Reconciler, or a very eaſie work. For the Presbyterians ſay, that a particular Church *May* conſiſt of one Congregation (and I believe they will ſay that ordinarily it is moſt fit): and the Independents ſay, It *Muſt* conſiſt but of one Congregation, or as many as *May* meet together for Perſonal Communion in Worſhip, if they have Liberty; but that this is not Eſſential to the Church. Either then here is no Difference, or if there be, it is thus reconciled in a word. The Presbyterians [*May be*] ſhall yield to the Independents [*Muſt be*]: The *Licet* to the *Oportet*. Secure them but of more than one Elder in a Church, and I dare warrant you that all the ſober Moderate Presbyterians ſhall readily and heartily yield to this. They have no conceit, that there *Muſt* needs go many Congregations to make a particular Political Church.

If any Presbyterians refuſe to condeſcend ſo far for Reconciliation, another eaſie remedy is at hand. Let each have Liberty to hold that Church which in the extent is ſuited to their Judgment. Let them that needs muſt have a Church of many Congregations, hold it, if the people do conſent (as few will) ſo they will faithfully do the Paſtoral work. If they will joyn three or four Pariſhes together as the loweſt Governed Church, let them have their Liberty (exerciſing juſt Diſcipline in them). But let others alſo have their Liberty that think it meeter, if not neceſſary, that the Church be but of one Congregation. The diſtance and quality of people may very much alter the caſe in this point. In places where four Pariſhes at great diſtance would afford but enough for one particular Church (if any ſuch Pariſhes be) it may be the more tolerable to have ordinary Meetings in the ſeveral Pariſhes for Worſhip, and Diſcipline adminiſtred (and ſometime the Lord's Supper) in a fuller meeting of all the Church: But I hope we are in no neceſſity that this ſhould be an ordinary caſe. But Liberty in theſe caſes may well be granted.

Chap.

Chap. VI. *Difference* IV.

THE fourth Point of Difference is, Whether a particular Church hath Power in it self to Ordain and Impose hands on their chosen Pastors? This Difference is easily Reconciled. For, 1. The Presbyterians hold that regularly it is fittest that the Pastors of divers Churches conjunct do Ordain, because of the Interest and Relation which they suppose each Minister hath to the Church Catholick, yet withal they deny not but he hath a true Ordination, that is ordained by more than one Pastor of the same Church. 2. Though they deny (and justly) that Imposition of hands in Ordination belongeth to the People, yet they judge not an irregularity in that Ceremony of force to nullifie the calling of the Pastor. 3. If a man that is duely elected and qualified, be in Possession of the Ministry, without a Regular just Ordination (as if it were but by Ruling Elders, or by one such with the people), though such an Ordination is not to be it self approved of, yet being upon a Doctrinal mistake, we may well hold Communion with such Churches, leaving the guilt of their Errour on themselves, when we cannot remedy it. 4. The Congregational Brethren hold that in case they have no Officers in that Church, the Counsel and Help of other Pastors may, and ordinarily ought to be made use of: and that ordinarily they are not to be held true Pastors, that be not Ordained by true Pastors, and that in a constituted Church the Act of Ordination belongeth to the Presbyters: and that the multitude confer not the Power of the Keys, but Christ immediately. And that the counsel of Neighbour Pastors is requisite, not only to a weak Church, because of their insufficiency to Judge, but also for the safety of a well furnished Church, by the Amplitude of Advice, and in *all Churches*, for the Communion of Churches. And I think, they grant it Lawful, though not Necessary, that these Neighbor Pastors lay on hands as well as counsel. This

Notton. Resp. P. 99. *Toti multitudini Ecclesiæ competit examen Pastorum per manuum impositionem, eorundem ordinatio in Ecclesia homogenea sed non in officium Ecclesiasticum; quia officium Ecclesiasticum recipitur invocatione, non ordinatione, idque à Christo immediatè, non à tota multitudine.*

Id. p. 100. *Vicinis insuper ordinariè consultis in Ecclesia homogenea competit fraternitati auxilio & Consilio Presbyterorum vicinorum, & prudentum aliarum Ecclesiarum,* P. 101. *Populus in judicando dirigi potest ac ordinarie debet à judicio aliorum Pastorum, Electionem vel præsunte vel concomitante. Requiritur Consilium aliorum Presbyterorum & Prudentum propter insufficientiam in Ecclesia infirmiori: Propter salutem in amplitudine Consiliarii in Ecclesiâ instructiori: in omnibus propter Communionem Ecclesiarum.* P. 103. *Propositio illa Bellarmini* [*Non sunt veri Pastores, qui non sunt à veris Pastoribus ordinati,*] *vera est ordinariè; sed extra ordinem minimè necessaria.* Jun. lb. p. 105. *Quamvis in Ecclesia bene constituta non debet, aliis quàm Presbyteris Ordinandi munus mandari, in defectu tamen idoneorum Presbyterorum, potest non-Presbyteris mandari.* Ames.

In Ecclesia constituta actum ipsum ordinandi ad Presbyteros pertinere ultro concedimus.

P. 106. *Toti multitudini Ecclesiæ non competit collatio potestatis clavium in Ministros, aut tota illa potestas, quæ Ministris Officium Ecclesiasticum tribuit.*

This much being Doctrinally agreed on, our Practical Agreement is easie; thus, 1. Let the Doctrinal point of the *Necessity of more Pastors to Ordain* be let alone, and left to each Mans Liberty (it being no Article of our Creed, nor a *Credendum* of absolute necessity;) and seeing the Congregational party hold that more (from Neighbour Churches) *May* join in Ordaining, and the Presbyterians hold that, they *Must* (in point of Duty,) in all reason the *May be* should yield to the *Must*: And therefore let the Congregational *de facto* on their own Principles admit of Neighbour Presbyters herein: If they will not yield in a thing by themselves confessed *Lawful* for the Reconciliation, and Communion of the Churches, the guilt of unpeaceableness will be theirs. Especially while they have the Election of their Offices, and no detriment is like to arise by it to their Churches.

2. But if any of them have not so much love to Peace and Communion of Churches as to yield to this, the Presbyterians can in consistency with their Principles, hold Communion with them for all this, as Churches, though deficient, having first disowned their disorder. And therefore their Pastors may join with us in our Assemblies, and we may as Brethren hold a loving correspondency, though we own not their defects.

Other differences (Doctrinally not the least) there are among us. 1. Whether a Man may not be Ordained a Minister, *sine titulo*, without Relation to a particular Church, but to the World and the Church Universal? And so, 2. Whether such may not be Ordained without popular Election? And, 3. Whether therefore a Man be not sometime in time, A Minister of Christ, before he be *The* Pastor of this particular Church. 4. And so whether the peoples Election be not only to make him *Their Pastor*, and not *A Minister* of Christ in general. 5. And whether such an Unfixed General Minister, may not Preach, Baptize; and also *pro tempore* administer the Lords Supper, yea and Govern a particular Church that *pro tempore* calleth him thereto; the peoples call or consent being necessary for the *Exercise*, but not alway to the *Being* of the Office or Intrinsick power: (As a Physicion licensed to practise in general must have Mens personal consent before he be *Their* Physicion) But, 1. These I cannot call properly differences between the parties, because I think the Congregational are not themselves agreed about them. 2. If they were, yet they are such whose practice our Reconciliation is not much concerned in. Let every Man in these Opinions be left to his liberty, and it need not hinder our Agreement or Communion. For my own Opinion about most of them, I have expressed it, Disput. of Church Government 1. and 2. and about some more of this nature.

Chap. VII. *Difference* V.

THE Fifth point of Difference is, about the firſt ſubject of the power of the Keys? Or more plainly and limitedly, of the Right of Church Government, and in particular of Cenſures. And here the difference ſeemeth greater than in any of the reſt: *And with ſome it is ſo.* Some have made the Congregation by a Major Vote the Governours of the Church. Againſt this as intolerable we have much to ſay. 1. There is no power but of God: But the power of Church Governing is not given to the people by God; therefore it is none. The Minor is good till a power be proved, and the peoples Commiſion produced; which never yet hath been attempted with any conſiderable appearance of Truth.

Obj. *The Keys were given to the Church in* Peter, *Mat.* 16.] *Anſ.* * 1. The moſt learned and moderate of theſe Brethren ſay, that There is no ſuch thing as a Lawful Repreſentative Church, therefore *Peter* was none. 2. It lyeth on them to prove that *Peter* repreſented the Major Vote of a Congregation, in receiving the Keys. Till they have proved it, we take them to have ſaid nothing. It ſufficeth us for a diſproof. 1. That no ſuch thing is ſpoken. 2. That the Keys of the Kingdom, are in Scripture phraſe ſignificant of Stewardly Government, which is in Scripture aſſigned to the Paſtors over the people. 3. That *Peter* was not a private Member himſelf, much leſs a Congregation; but a Paſtor, and a ſingle Paſtor, Biſhop or Apoſtle. 4. That the ſame power is elſewhere given to all the Apoſtles, (*John* 20. 21.) but not to private Members, or to Congregations of ſuch. 5. That *John* 20, 21, 22. the power is

Againſt the peoples Power of the Keys *Rutherford* Peaceable Plea, and in his Due Right of Presbyteries, and many more have written at large, and unanſwerably taking the Keys for [Government or Paſtoral Adminiſtrations.]

* Mr. *Norton* p. 45. [*Sin per Eccleſiam Repreſenttaivam intelligitur Eccleſia talis proprie dicta. h. t. Eccleſia virtualis, vict. Eccleſia, Eccleſiam repræſentatam ſubjectivè repræſentans, atq; adto vi delegationis habens poteſtatem earum negotia exequendi jure Dei; hoc ſenſu ſimpliciter negamus Eccleſiam repræſentativam.*]

Rutherford's Plea, p. 6. The Power of the Keys is given to the Church of Believers, as to the end, [for the Edifying of the Body of Chriſt, *Eph.* 4.]

P. 4. Their Power of Chuſing is a Power about the Keys, but not of the Keys: And it is common to all Believers who are not to take Paſtors as the Market goeth upon a blind hearſay, *&c.*

It's commonly granted them, that the people regularly ſhould chuſe their Officers, where ſome unfitneſs of their own doth not forbid it; but that neceſſarily they muſt conſent to his Relation, or elſe he cannot Exerciſe his Office on them. And it is granted them commonly [according to *Cyprian*'s words,] that the people alſo have a great hand in the Rejection of unworthy Paſtors, and that in caſe they prove intolerable, and they have no more regular way to depoſe them, after ſufficient patience and warning they muſt forſake them. But none of theſe are Acts of Church Government no more than for a Corporation to chuſe the Major, or for the Servant while he is Free to chuſe his Maſter, or a Scholar his School-maſter, or a Patient his Phyſicion, or for the Soldiers to forſake a Traiterous Commander

mander that would deliver up their lives unto the Enemy. It's one thing to be a Church Governor, and another thing to chuſe or refuſe a Church Governor.

Dr. *Owen* was at laſt againſt all Governing Power in the people, and for the Paſtors Government only.

deſcribed to be a power of Remitting and Retaining Sins, annext to their Miniſterial Miſſion, and therefore ſuch as belongeth not to private Men.

Obj. 1 *Cor.* 5. 4, 13. The Church is commanded to deliver the Inceſtuous perſon to Satan, and to put away the wicked perſon from among them.] *Anſ.* 1. That was but *Executively*, *Paul* having himſelf moſt ſolemnly paſt the Sentence, *v.* 3, 4. [For I verily as abſent in Body, but preſent in Spirit, have judged already as though I were preſent concerning him that hath ſo done this deed, (*Paul* you ſee doth judge : And that) in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, when ye are gathered together, and my Spirit, (What then doth he decree to do?) with the power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to deliver ſuch an one to Satan, *&c.*] which with the Excommunication, it is moſt probable contained a Corporal miraculous penalty (as *Elimas* was ſtruck blind, and *Ananias* and *Saphira* dead, *&c.*) ſo that [to deliver] is the act that *Paul* himſelf reſolved to perform, at their meeting : The Text [ἤδη κέκρικα τὸν ὄντο] is not [I have judged concerning him,] but [I have judged him] even [παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον, &c.] [to deliver ſuch a one.] But if any will rather take [delivering] here to be the Churches act than *Pauls*, yet it is plain that it is after his Judgment or Sentence, or [Condemnation] as the Syriack hath it ; and therefore that it is but, 1. The ſolemn declaration. 2. And Execution of the ſentence already paſt.

2. But if *Paul* had left the Work to them he wrote to, there would have been no proof that the Cenſure had been committed to the people : Here are two works to be done : The Sentence, and the Execution, (that is, avoiding Communion, *&c.*) and accordingly two parts of the Church to do it, the Paſtors to Cenſure, and the people to Execute it, by actual avoiding or putting away. Now if *Paul* write to an Organized, Governed Society to [deliver to Satan and put away] no Man can hence prove that he committeth the ſame parts of the work equally to all the parts of the Society : No more than he can prove, if the Prince write to this Burrough [to caſt out a turbulent Member] that he intendeth to equal the people with the Magiſtrates in the work, or to commit the ſame part of the work to one as to another : But rather it plainly importeth (and no more) that every Man in his place obey the command.

Obj. *Matth.* 18. Tell the Church] authorizeth the people. *Anſ.* 1. It is incumbent on the affirmers to prove that it is the whole Body of the people that is there meant. And ſome think this Argument diſproveth it, [That Church which muſt be heard, muſt be told (*If he hear not the Church.*) But the whole Congregation is not the Church that is to be Heard ; therefore it is not the Church that is to be told.] The Major ſeems plain, becauſe elſe the Equivocation in the word [Church] would make the matter not intelligible. The Minor they prove, becauſe the whole Congregation cannot ſpeak

and

and be heard, without confusion: Nor are the Representers of the people in speaking: If they be, then here's a word for a Ministerial Representative Church.

2. But yet for my part I shall yield that it is this whole Congregation that is here meant that must be told. But my answer then is the same as the last to the last objected Text: It is the same Church that hath Officers and People, the same Body that hath Eyes, and Ears, and Hands: But it doth not follow, that the Ears, and Eyes, and Hands, are the same Members: Or if the Man have a command to Hear, See, and Work, that he is therefore commanded to do all these by the same Parts. The Church may first Hear by her Officers, and lastly *Hear* by the Congregated people, and Execute by them, and yet not *Censure* or Admonish, or Absolve by them. All the Church must *hear* at last, and each part do its proper work in *casting out*.

Arg. 2. If God have made the Pastors the Stewards, Overseers, and Rulers of the Churches, commanding them to Rule well, and the people to Obey them as their Rulers, then is it not the people that God hath made the Rulers. But the Antecedent is express, 1 *Cor.* 4. 12. *Heb.* 13. 7, 17, 24. *Acts* 20. 28. 1 *Thes.* 5. 12, 13. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. and 3. 1, 5. 1 *Pet.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 5. It is intolerable abuse of Scripture to suppose that it is so self-contradictory as to make the same persons the Rulers and the Ruled, and to command them to obey others as their *Rulers* whom it would have to Rule them, and be obeyed, and to command them to Rule well whom it would have to be subject.

Arg. 3. (To be briefer in the rest.) This Doctrine of popular Rule destroyeth the very Essence of a Political Church: For as in a Civil Political Body the *Pars Imperans*, and *Pars Subdita* are Essential to it, so are the Ruling and Ruled part in a Political Church: So that the Being is gone, and the Body dissolved into a Community, or ungoverned Company, if the Governing part be taken down: As here it is: For the people are made Governours, whom God never made so, and so indeed are none. And the Officers being a few to the people, are supposed to be subject.

Arg. 4. And this course introduceth (having destroyed that of Gods Institution) a *New Species* of a Church.

Arg. 5. And it setteth the people on a Work that they are uncapable of. Their parts allow them not to judge some cases, but secondarily as obedient to their Guides, (as some Heresies against the Original Text, *&c.*) Their Callings and Necessities allow them not time for all that work that to a faithful Government is required, it being such as taketh up with Ministers, a great part of their time.

Arg. 6. And it setteth up an hundred and one, to be Governours of nine and ninety, without any Scripture command or president, if not to the oppression or dividing of the Church. Where did Men go to Voting in Scripture for Acts of Government? And where find we that the lesser part are to be Ruled by the greater? What if the lesser part be the wiser, or in the right, and say as God saith (in judging of a Heretick or such like) and the greater part be

more ignorant and partial, and contradict God, and caſt out an Orthodox Man as an Heretick? By what Word of God are the ſmaller number bound to take them for their Rulers that can but get the caſting Voice?

But yet though ſome do thus differ from us in the Eſſentials of Church Policy, we are here in no danger, I think, of a continued diſtance from the Congregational party, but may quickly be Reconciled, if indeed there be any real difference among us. For, 1. The Brethren that we have to do with do expreſly reject and write againſt this Doctrine as Browniſm (it is their own word) * which ſay they [doth in effect put the chief (if not the whole) of the Rule and Government into the hands of the people, and drowns the Elders Votes, which are but few, in the Major Vote of theirs.] And they [give unto the Elders or Presbytery, a binding power of Rule and Authority proper and peculiar to them. †]

2. It is uſually confeſſed by the moſt Learned of them that the Elders are the Rulers of the Church, (for the expreſs Scripture cannot be denied) and that (ſay they) two or three, or more ſelect perſons ſhould be put into an Office, and be truſted with an intire Intereſt of Power for a multitude, to which that multitude ought, by a command from Chriſt, to be ſubject, and obedient, as to an Ordinance to guide them in their conſent, and in whoſe ſentence the ultimate formal Miniſterial Act, of binding or looſing ſhould conſiſt: This power muſt needs be eſteemed and acknowledged in theſe few to have the proper Notion and Character of *Authority*, in compariſon of that Power (which muſt yet concur with theirs) that is in a whole Body or multitude of Men, which have a greater and nearer intereſt in thoſe Affairs, over which theſe few are ſet as Rulers. ‡] And as long as they confeſs that the Paſtors are the Rulers and the people muſt obey, I think, in ſenſe we are agreed.

3. And

* See Dr. *Taylor*'s 2d Diſſwaſive very well on the Text, *Dic Eccleſiæ*. Mr. *T. Goodwin*, and Mr. *Nye* Pref. to Mr. *Cotton*'s Keys, p. 5. † *Ibid* p. 4. ‡ *Fid. ibid* p. 7.

It's no contemptible caſe that Mr. *Cawdrey* puts Review, p. 151. Are not a company of Women with the Paſtors a true Church, having all things Eſſential to it? And have they the Ordaining, Admitting, Governing power by Vote or not? If not, then is it not in a Church of Saints as ſuch, but in the true Governours by Office, or in none.

I muſt profeſs that Scripture and Reaſon ſpeak ſo plainly that Paſtors are Gods Officers to Rule. Rulers muſt Rule, and the Ruled obey, that I admire that wiſe and good Men can find a temptation to err in ſo plain a caſe.

A Church in a Prince's or Noblemans Houſe, will conſiſt of perhaps a Lord and Lady and their Children, and a hundred or two hundred Servants: Now can any Man think it agreeable to Gods Word, that the Servants becauſe they are the Major Vote, (and the Children at Age with them) ſhall queſtion, examine, and cenſure by Excommunication their Parents and Rulers?

It's a true and weighty Speech of Mr. *Cawdrey*, *ib.* p. 155. [Theſe deſtructive courſes of Levelling Church and State, proceed from the placing of all Power Originally in the people—]

It hath been made a Controverſie whether Biſhops or Paſtors may Excommunicate a Prince: But if his own Family Church, (juſt and meet) ſhould be a Church, the whave him Examined and Excommunis nor heed by his own Servants out of that Family-Church methinks ſhould ſeem a harder caſe.

3. And though many of them ſay that the Power of the Keys are in the Church or people, yet they uſually tell us that it is but *Priviledge* and *Liberty* which they mean by *Power* and by *Keys*, and that as diſtinct from Authority: So that it is but a miſuſe of Terms, and a falſe Expoſition of a Text, that they are guilty of, rather than an Error in the thing it ſelf.

Cotton Keys, p. 33. The Brethren of the Church are the firſt Subject of Church Liberty, and the Elders thereof of Church Authority: And both together of all Church Power needful to be exerciſed within themſelves.

4. And * they confeſs alſo that this power of the Paſtors [they have immediately from Chriſt (in reſpect of a mediation of delegation or dependance on each other) and are the firſt Subjects of the power allotted them.] They ſay that [the Office of Rectors is received immediately from Chriſt, and to be exerciſed in the Name of Chriſt] and that [it is the Deſignation of the perſon that is from the Church, but the Application of the Office from Chriſt.] Mr. *Norton* addeth, p. 75. [*Diſtinguendum accurate inter officium ipſum, & conjunctionem perſonæ cum officio: Officium eſt à Chriſto conjunctio talis perſonæ cum tali officio eſt ab Eccleſia: Chriſtus confert authoritatem illi perſonæ quam eligit ad hoc munus, & quaſi præſentat Chriſto Eccleſia,*] that this is the very truth, ſuppoſing Ordination alſo to have its place) I have manifeſted Diſpur. of Ordinat.

* *Jid. ib.* p. 3. *Norton* pag. 74, 75.

The truth * is, the people have not the leaſt degree of Governing Power: (but each man of Self-government, and Parents, and Maſters of Family-government) It is Chriſt that appointeth Miniſters as his Ambaſſadors, Stewards and Officers, and commandeth them to ſpeak in his Name and ſtead, and the people to hear and obey him in them. So that the gainſaying of this Truth, would be of unſpeakable injury to the Church: (Beſides what is forementioned) 1. It would rob Chriſt of his Government, which is exerciſed by his Stewards and Miniſters. 2. It will engage the godly people in Rebellion. 3. Yea, and in Uſurpation of his Government. 4. And it will deprive the Church of the very life of all that Edification and Conſolation which they ſhould have by the Miniſtry. This is our Joy in Baptiſm, that as we deliver up our ſelves or Children to Chriſt, ſo Chriſt there by his Authorized Miniſter actually receiveth us or them. This is our Joy in the Lord's Supper, that Chriſt by his Authorized Miniſter, ſaith to us, [*Take ye, Eat ye, This is my Body*, &c.] and actually delivereth himſelf to us. This is our Joy in Miniſterial Preaching of the Goſpel, that by a ſpecial Officer Chriſt proclaimeth to us the offer of free Pardon and Eternal Life. This is our Comfort in Miniſterial Abſolution (which ſhould be as Solemn as Excommunication) that Chriſt by his Meſſenger doth pronounce us pardoned by name, and receive us into Mercy and Church Communion, ſuppoſing that our Repentance

* *Judicium de coercendo pœnis corporalibus, eſt Magiſtratus: Judicium, de actionibus Paſtoralibus præſtandis, an non, eſt Paſtorum: Judicium de obediendo vel non obediendo eſt ſubditorum. De Propriis actionibus unuſquiſq; præjudicat, officium diſcernendo.*

be

be true as we profeſs it. And ſo this is the terrour of Excommunication, that Chriſt by his Officer doth pronounce men bound, and bind them over to anſwer it at his Bar, and caſt them by his Sentence out of his Houſe. If you make all theſe to be but humane Adminiſtrations, they are made vain.

And therefore blame not the Presbyterians if they have been jealous of Chriſt's Intereſt, and his peoples Comfort, and the life and honour of all the Ordinances performed by the Miniſter. But yet the peoples Liberties are ſecured, and the Congregational Brethren may have their deſires. For who will deny that the Miniſterial Government being not Coercive by external force, the people therefore muſt conſent, or elſe we cannot govern them. We can lay an Obligation on them from God (*e. g.* to avoid ſuch a Heretick): but we cannot force them to obey it: And therefore there can be no executive Excommunication, that is, Avoiding of the Offenders, without the peoples conſent! But this is their *Sin*, when they anſwer not the Command of God, and not their Power to Govern. We grant alſo that they are not to be blindly led, and take all carelefly upon their Paſtor's words; but muſt have (ordinarily) cogniſance of the caſe before a perſon be caſt out and they obliged to avoid him: So that they have a *Judicium Diſcretionis*, as the Paſtors have the *Judicium Directionis*. But yet (as I have ſhewed in Pref. to the Reform. Paſt.) the ſinful diſſent of the people will not alway diſable or excuſe the Paſtors from their part. If a man be proved an Heretick, and the Major Vote of the people do abſolve him, in ſome caſes, it may be the Paſtor's Duty, openly to pronounce him a Heretick, and (if impenitent) unfit for the Communion of the Church, and to bind him over to God's Judgment, and charge him to depart, and the Church to avoid him. If the Church will not do their Duty (by conſenting) that will not alway excuſe me from mine (which is this now deſcribed). Yea, and in the execution I will do my part, and leave them in the guilt of omitting theirs: that is, I will avoid familiarity with him, and will not perſonally give him the Sacrament, and if he intrude and take it, I will openly diſclaim him; Otherwiſe, 1. I muſt not Preach and apply God's Word, unleſs the Major Vote conſent. For all this is but the Preaching of God's Word about avoiding Hereticks (or other Offenders) and applying it to this caſe (ſuppoſing the Matter of Fact paſt doubt.) 2. And then a Major Vote might warrant me and the Minor part to break the expreſs Commands of God, (and ſo make a God of a ſinning people): For God ſaith [A man that is an Heretick reject: with ſuch a one Eat not: Keep not company with him, that he may be aſhamed: from ſuch turn away, *&c.*] And may I diſobey all theſe expreſs Commands, if the Majority be but againſt them? May I give him perſonally the Sacrament, or Abſolve him, or be familiar with him, *&c?* Indeed, 1. I would not forſake the Church, nor make a Diviſion in it from every ſuch Miſcarriage; but when I have done my own Duty, leave the guilt on them, if they refuſed to do theirs. 2. And I would not ſo much as paſs the Sentence, or do what I have before ſaid, in caſe it might by breeding a Diviſion do more hurt than good in the Church, (for no Duty is at all times a Duty), but would be contented ſoberly

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to have entered my Diſſent; to free my ſelf from the peoples Sin. 3. And upon theſe grounds we will grant a uſe of Voting in the Church (though I would have as little need of it as I could) Though we will acknowledge no Governing Votes, yet for Peace and Concord we will acknowledge that in things indifferent a Minor part ſhould ſubmit to the Major part: For in order to Unity, a Majority ſhould have force, though among Subjects in order of Regiment, Ten thouſand have no more Authority (I mean, *Jus Regendi*) than one.

And both in Receiving, Rejecting and Abſolving Members, as the Governing Power is only in the Paſtors, when the People are to obey, and who are bound by office to attend on the Work, ſo it is plain that the obligation to Obedience bindeth the People to ſubmit to the Direction and Judgment of their Paſtors, if they know them not to go againſt the Word of God. And if the People do intruſt the Officers or any Delegates of their own in Conjunction with them, to judge of thoſe that are to be taken in or caſt out, or if their own incapacity diſable them from a ſufficient diſcuſſion of the caſe, or their buſineſs allow them not ſo much leiſure as the work requireth, they are bound to acquieſce in the judgment of their Rulers. I prove it *ad hominem* (the Nature of Government and Obedience proving it undeniably *ad rem*). If a Minor part (as 99.) is bound (by your own opinion) to ſubmit to the Major part (as 100) that yet have no Governing Power, when they diſſent themſelves (and ſo captivate their Conſciences to a vulgar Vote), much more ſhould the People in a caſe not underſtood (where Conſcience therefore hath nothing againſt the Sentence) ſubmit to the judgment of the Stewards of Chriſt whom he hath commanded them as their Rulers to obey: But the former is their own: Therefore

I conclude this (on which I have been larger in Reaſoning, becauſe of the weight of it) that here is no room for any other Reconciliation, than to ſee our Agreements, and to leave each other to the Liberty of practiſing according to the ſmall differences of our Judgments. We are agreed that the Paſtors are the Rulers, and the people the Ruled that muſt obey: and that the people muſt be governed as rational free Agents, and have a Freedom from Arbitrary Government, and from all Commands or Sentences that are contrary to the Word of God, but not a Freedom from Obedience, nor from the Bleſſing of Paſtoral Conduct. And we are Agreed that, in order to Unity, the Major Vote in lawful things muſt be ſubmitted to: and that a Miniſter (having entered his diſſent) may forbear ſuch reproofs or cenſures of a Heretick or Impious man, as would break the Peace of the Church, and do more harm than good, becauſe of the peoples ſinful adhering to him; ſo be it, they own not the ſin it ſelf, nor do thus ordinarily to the excluding of Diſcipline: For then I would leave that people. What farther need then of a Reconciliation in order to our Communion? If any will not take in, or caſt out a Member without the peoples Major Vote, let them take their Liberty: And if any people had rather truſt their Paſtors and Delegates with this Care, and will more acquieſce in their Judgments; till they ſee cauſe to ſuſpect them, let them alſo have their Liber-

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ty; we can do nothing againſt the peoples wills, but by propoſal! And if the paſtors and people conſent in theſe modal or circumſtantial things, it little concerneth Aſſociated Churches. Let this therefore be unmentioned and we are Agreed.

Chap. VIII. *Difference* VI.

THE ſixth Difference is, whether a Paſtor of one Church, may do the work of a Paſtor in other Churches when he hath their conſent and call? Some have made a ſtir about this, and dream'd that a Paſtor may Preach out of his own Church, but only as a private man, and therefore may not Baptize, Adminiſter the Lord's Supper, or exerciſe Diſcipline in any other Church. But the Learned and Sober part of the Diſſenters, are become Conſenters in the moſt of this, ſo that here is little work for a Reconcilement. For they confeſs that Miniſters may as Miniſters Preach and Adminiſter the Sacraments to other Churches. Indeed they ſay, that this is only *Charitativè*, not *Authoritativè*. Herein they miſtake: For though ſuch have not a *ſtated* Authority over another Church, yet have they a *temporary* Authority, as they are called. For he that hath the Call and Power of Office, and a Call *pro tempore* to exerciſe that Office, hath Authority to exerciſe it, and doth exerciſe an Authority (for the Office eſſentially is an Authority.) But every true Miniſter of Chriſt that *pro tempore* is called to the Miniſterial work in another Church, hath an Office (which is Authority) and a call to exerciſe it. Therefore,

See Mr. *Norton* at large proving that a Miniſter of a particular Church, may (not only by virtue of his Gifts) and the common bond of Chriſtian Charity, but alſo by virtue of his Calling, exerciſe in another Church the acts of his Office, *Charitativè non Authoritativè*, p. 76. c. 6.

Of this ſee my Diſput. of Ordination, and 3d of Epiſcopacy.

But ſaith Mr. *Norton*, p. 83. [Hence it would follow either that there are occaſional and partial Miniſters *pro tempore*, or that the ſame man is the fixed Miniſter of many Churches at once, or that he is not the Miniſter of that Church where yet he hath Miniſterial Authority.] *Anſ.* None of all theſe will follow: But only this, that he that is either a ſtated Miniſter in the Church Univerſal, or alſo a fixed Paſtor of a particular Church, may alſo be the temporary Paſtor of another particular Church. As a fixed Phyſicion of one Hoſpital, or Schoolmaſter of one School, may upon a Call both *Charitativè & Authoritativè*, be for a Day or a Week the Phyſicion of another Hoſpital, or the Schoolmaſter of another School. It is a contradiction to ſay, [He may exerciſe his Office, and not Authoritatively.]

Obj. But ſaith Mr. *N.* the Miniſter of this Church, is not the Miniſter of another Church by the conſtitution of the Holy Ghoſt, by whom every Miniſter is tyed to one certain Flock.]

Anſ. 1.

Anſ. 1. A great Errour. There ſhould yet be general Miniſters in the Church that ſhould be itinerant, and no more fixed (where the Churches ſtate ſo requireth it) than *Paul*, *Barnabas*, *Apollo*, *Titus*, *Timothy*, and abundance more then were. Your own Argument is, *Pag.* 80, 81. [*Ex analogia Poteſtatis Miniſtrorum erga alias Eccleſias cum Poteſtate Miniſteriali erga omnes gentes, ſive omnem Creaturam: Si Miniſtri Ordinarii virtute inſtituti habent Poteſtatem Miniſterialem, non Eccleſiaſticam modo debito, erga omnem creaturam, habent aliquam Poteſtatem Miniſterialem Eccleſiaſticam modo debito erga omnem Eccleſiam. At, &c.*] What need we more? Is not *Poteſtas Miniſterialis* Authority? Then I know not what Authority is! Authority is either Rational *ex virtute & æſtimatione honorum*; or it is Imperial or Official, which in all ſubordinate Officers is *Jus agendi actus ejus Officii*. Miniſterial Power is *Jus Miniſtrandi*: Miniſterial Authority is *Jus Miniſtrandi*: Therefore he that hath Miniſterial Power, hath Miniſterial Authority. 2. No Miniſter is ſo tyed by the Holy Ghoſt to one certain Flock (any more than one School-maſter or Phyſician) as not to exerciſe his Office by Authority *pro tempore* in another Flock when he hath a Call. Charity and Authority go together. Charity obligeth him to exerciſe his Office, that is, his Authority. The reſt of the Objections there an ordinary Reader may anſwer without help.

But yet here is nothing to hinder our Communion. For, 1. They grant us in Subſtance what we deſire, that is, the temporary exerciſe of the Miniſterial Office, to the World, or to other Churches according to their Capacities. 2. If yet there be any difference in Principles, let them that think Miniſters have no Power out of their Congregation, practice accordingly, and ſtay at home: Let them give us our Liberty in this, and take theirs, and the matter need not hinder our Communion.

Chap. IX. *Difference* VII.

THE ſeventh Difference is, about the Power of a particular Church to exerciſe all Government and Church Ordinances within it ſelf, without Subordination to Synods or any other as extrinſick Eccleſiaſtical Superiour Governours.

This is Pleaded for by the Independents in ordinary caſes (whence Mr. *Cotton* owns the Name of *Independency*, Keys, *P.* 29. 53.) ſaith he, [A Church of a particular Congregation, conſiſting of Elders and Brethren, and walking in the Truth and Peace of the Goſpel, as it is the firſt ſubject of all Church Power, needful to be exerciſed within it ſelf; ſo it is Independent upon any other (Church or Synod) for the exerciſing of the ſame]. Some of the Epiſcopal and Presbyterians deny them this, and affirm, that Synods are a Superiour Power, and that particular Congregations without the lower ſort of Synods called *Claſſes* may not Excommunicate, and *that in* an ordinary Regimental

order, Congregations are under the Government of Synods (and consequently say the Episcopal, of the Heads of those Synods). But the more moderate both Episcopal and Presbyterians hold that Synods *oblige directly* but *gratia Unitatis & Communionis Ecclesiarum*, and not directly by a Superiour Governing Power. So Bishop *Usher* profest his judgment to me: and that a particular Bishop or Church was not subject to a Synod as their Superiour Governour, but bound in lawful things to consent for Unity and Communion. And Mr. *Cotton* granteth, for ought I see, as much, if not more than this comes to; and Mr. *T. Goodwin* and Mr. *Nye*, I think as much in their Preface to his Book, saith Mr. *Cotton*, p. 53. [A fourth Corollary touching the Independency of Churches is, That a Church fallen into any offence (whether it be the whole Church, or a strong Party in it), is not Independent in the exercise of Church Power, but is subject both to the admonition of any other Church, and to the *Determination* and *Judicial Sentence* of a Synod, for Direction into a way of Truth and Peace] [For (saith he) *Ecclesia litigans non ligat*, that is, if Christ hath not given to a particular Church a Promise to bind and loose in Heaven, what they *bind and loose* on Earth, unless they agree together, and agree in his Name, then such a Church is not Independent in their Proceedings, as do fail in either: For all the Independency that can be claimed is founded upon that Promise, *What ye bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven*, &c.] The fifth Corollary affirmeth, that [Though the Church of a particular Congregation consisting of Elders and Brethren, and walking with a right foot in the Truth and Peace of the Gospel, be the first subject of all Church Power needful to be exercised within it self, and consequently be Independent from any other Church or Synod in the use of it; Yet it is a safe and wholesom and holy Ordinance of Christ, for such particular Churches to joyn together in holy Covenant or Communion, and Consolation (*Consociation* or Consultation *it should be*) amongst themselves, to administer all their Church Affairs (which are of weighty and difficult and common concernment) not without common Consultation and Consent of other Churches about them. Now Church Affairs of weighty and difficult and common concernment, we account to be, the Election and Ordination of Elders, Excommunication of an Elder, or any person of Publick Note, and Employment; the translation of an Elder from one Church to another, or the like. In which case we conceive it safe and wholesom, and an Holy Ordinance, to proceed with common consultation and consent.] And so he proceedeth distinctly to prove this, 1. Safe. 2. Wholsom. 3. An Ordinance, adding this Caution, which we accept. [To see that this Consociation of Churches be not perverted, either to the oppression or diminution of the just Liberty and Authority of each particular Church within it self; who being well supplied with a faithful and expert Presbytery of their own, do walk in their integrity, according to the Truth and Peace of the Gospel. Let Synods have their just Authority in all Churches, how pure soever, in determining such Δικαιώματα as are requisite for the Edification of all Christ's Churches according to God. But in the Election and Ordination of Officers, and censure of Offenders, let it suffice

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the Churches conſociate to aſſiſt one another, with their counſel and right hand of fellowſhip, when they ſee a particular Church to uſe their Liberty and Power aright. But let them not put forth the Power of their Community, either to take ſuch Church Acts out of their hands, or to hinder them in their lawful courſe, unleſs they ſee them (through ignorance or weakneſs) to abuſe their Liberty or Authority in the Goſpel—They may indeed prevent the abuſe of their Liberties, and direct in the lawful uſe of them, but not take them away, though themſelves ſhould be willing.] So alſo before, *Pag.* 47. he ſaith [4th *Propoſ.* In caſe a particular Church be diſturbed with Errour or Scandal, and the ſame maintained by a Faction amongſt them: Now a Synod of Churches, or of their Meſſengers, is the firſt Subject of that Power and Authority whereby Errour is judicially convinced and condemned, the truth ſearched out and determined, and the way of Truth and Peace declared, and Impoſed upon the Churches] which he proceeds to prove.

And Dr. *Goodwin* and Mr. *Nye* in their Preface approving of this, ſaying that theſe Synods have [a due meaſure of Power committed to them, ſuited and proportioned to thoſe, and are furniſhed, not only with ability to give counſel and advice, but further, upon ſuch occaſions with a Miniſterial Power and Authority, to *determine*, *declare* and *enjoyn* ſuch things as may tend to the reducing ſuch Congregations to right order and peace.]

And whereas they put it in as a caution, that yet Synods may not Excommunicate; I anſwer, that as long as they grant that they may renounce Communion with ſuch a Church, and Doctrinally apply to them their Portion, and Doctrinally enjoyn the people to avoid the impenitent Offenders (by applying the Scriptures to them that enjoyn it) we have no mind to diſagree with them about the reſt.

I conclude therefore, that we are Dogmatically agreed in this great Point, as far as is neceſſary to our Loving Communion. Let us in our Conſociations, either keep our Principles to our ſelves, of the degree of a Synods Power, or elſe let all have Liberty to write them down in the Regiſter Book of the Synod, and ſo to proceed in Concordant Practice. Perhaps ſome may be found that think Synods are the proper Superiour Governours of the Paſtors of particular Churches, yea, and their *Ordinary* Governours: Others may think that they are not neceſſary, nor any Ordinance of God; but yet a lawful thing that may for Peace be uſed. And others (that I think are in the truth) may think that Synods are not the direct Governours of the particular Paſtors, but are God's Ordinance for the Communion of Churches, and ſo indirectly bind in lawful Agreements, both as our own Conſents oblige us, and as God's general Command of doing all things in Unity and Peace and Concord, doth animate theſe Agreements. Let us impoſe none of our Principles here on others; but Agree to hold Communion in Synods, for mutual Edification, and Corroboration, and ſuch like ends of Communion as Mr. *Cotton* mentioneth; and to be accountable to the Brethren in caſes of offence, ſo far as to render them due ſatisfaction, and hear their Brotherly Admonition; In a word, let us but maintain that

neceſſary *Communion* of Churches which the Ends and Nature of the Church require, and we ſhall preſs no more.

Obj. But, being free, why ſhould we deſire to be bound, in Aſſociations?

Anſw. You are not free from brotherly Charity, & the Communion of Saints, and the Concordant doing the Works of God, of common Concernment. Nor do we deſire you to bind your ſelves to any thing but what is antecedently your Duty, and you're already bound to by God.

Object. But perhaps if we aſſociate with you, you will be rigid for your own ways and be the Major part, and then if we diſpleaſe you, our Communion ſhall be rejected to our diſgrace.] *Anſ.* 1. The Churches can paſs as diſgraceful a Sentence on you, if you come not near them, as if you joyned with them. Yea, and they will no doubt take it to be their Duty, if they have proof of the Hereſies or Scandals of any Neighbour Miniſter, (aggravated by the ſhunning of their Brethrens Communion), to diſown them, and warn their people of the danger. If you joyn with us, you are more like to eſcape ſuch Cenſures or injurious Reflections, than by keeping from us: For familiarity kindleth Love: and your preſence may awe many, and your words ſatisfie thoſe that could not be ſo well ſatisfied, if they had not heard you ſpeaking for your ſelves.

2. Moreover, you have opportunity to prevent ſuch abuſe as you fear, in your terms of entring the Aſſociation.

3. Surely Brethren that ſo earneſtly deſire your Communion for the Churches Peace, will not be haſty to renounce Communion with you.

4. By their Accepting you, they are engaged not to Reject you, for any Opinion or Practice which they knew you guilty of when they Accepted you: For if it were not of weight to hinder your Reception, it may not be of weight to cauſe your Rejection.

Obj. *But under the Name of a Communion of Churches, you ſeem to ſet up a Provincial Church, with a Diſcipline of taking in and caſting out.*

Anſ. * Is it the *Name* of a Church that you fear, or the *Thing*? Not the *Name*, for we uſe it not, nor do you charge this on us. If the *Thing* tells us what you mean by a Church. If ſuch a thing as you uſe to define it to be, we deny that we ſet up ſuch a Church. But if you will call the Officers and Delegates of the Churches, met for Communion, by the Name of a Church, you may uſe your Liberty: we hold this Communion for no higher ends, than your own forecited words allow: and therefore it is but ſuch an Aſſembly as you may allow.

Take Mr. *Norton's* yet larger Conceſſions, *Pag.* 110, &c. [*Eccleſiæ particulares mutuam Communionem inter ſe inire poſſunt, & in eis cauſæ Communes omnium Eccleſiarum*, i. e. *talis res quæ omnibus Eccleſiis particularibus Communes ſunt, quamvis immediatè unam tantum Eccleſiam tangunt, ut ſunt Paſtorum vocationes,*

* Nort. *P.* 45. *Si Eccleſia Repreſentativa ſumitur pro mutua conſultatione, conſociatione & confœderatione Eccleſiarum particularium in Synodis per Legatos, nova Eccleſiæ forma non additâ, & libertate Eccleſiæ ſalvâ, rem agnoſcimus.*

vocationes, Membrorum excommunicationes, &c. Vel etiam talia res quæ immediatè omnes Ecclesias ex æquo tangunt communiter) Communi consensu Ecclesiarum dijudicentur & discernantur]—Pag. 111. [*Solummodò inde Colligimus ei potestatem supremam decidendi quæstiones fidei debitam, quod & prompte damus.*—] Pag. 112. *De necessitate Synodorum. Tametsi Concilia non sint ita absolutè necessaria, ut Ecclesia sine illis nunquam bene esse possit; tamen in tantâ hominum malitiâ, & temporum perversitate, non tantum insigniter sunt utilia, sed etiam quodammodo necessaria: ita ut Ecclesia salutari hoc remedio non possit carere, sine insigni veritatis, pietatis & Concordiæ Christianæ detrimento. Nemo, inquit Parkerus, quod sciam, Ecclesiæ alicujus reformatæ alumnus ante Hugonem Grotium, negavit Synodos esse necessarias: quibus nos ὁμοφρόνως libenter profitemur, sequentibus freti rationibus. 1. A Natura duce; Cujus dictamine in Controversiis difficilioribus & grandioribus à judicio inferiori ad præcellentius confugimus. Hinc jus appellationum in causis gravioribus ab inferiori ad superiorem sententiam.* Parker: *Cum in causis & Personis Ecclesiasticis multæ lites oriantur, jus appellationum necessariò concedendum quis neget? Appellationes sunt juris Divini, & naturalis, & in omni societate admodum necessariæ, propter multorum judicum iniquitatem & ignorantiam. 2. A fine Concilii*—3. *Ab exemplo, &c. 4. A Præcellentia Concilii, &c. 5. A* ὁμονοία *Ecclesiarum; quam valde tuetur unio sententiarum in Synodis; unde* ὁμόνοια *suavissima & diuturna, cum doctrina & mores probantur ad invicem: sin autem singulis Ecclesiis particularibus juxta sententias proprias incedere licet, nulla habita vicinarum ratione, quam facilè in partes & dissidia abituræ sunt? 6. A fructu administrationum: quæ si cæteris Ecclesiis consentientibus fiant, spes est etiam fore efficaces: sin dissentientibus timendum ne inefficaces sint. E.g. in casu excommunicationis vicinis comprobantibus excommunicatus arguitur ab omnibus, dijudicatus ab omnibus, procidens, &c.*—Pag. 118. *Quatenus particulares Ecclesiæ sese subjicere debent sententiæ Synodi. R. Legitimis Synodi decretis ab omnibus Ecclesiis h. e. à majori parte Ecclesiarum receptis, & à Magistratu Christiano approbatis, tenentur particulares Ecclesiæ acquiescere, 1. Sub periculo reatus ordinis publici turbati. 2. Sub pœna non Communionis cum aliis Ecclesiis. 3. Sub pœna correctionis per pœnas civiles à Magistratu.*

Then he comes to the 2. What if the Synod conclude against the Truth, and the Church stand for it? And answereth, 1. That it's not easily to be supposed in reformed times, And 2. *Uti in Civilibus, est Veritas absoluta & Judicialis: & sententia Supremi judicis vera est quoad homines, licet non sit vera absolutè: Ita in Ecclesiasticis Veritas est absoluta & Synodalis: Synodus autem cum sit supremus judex quæstionis, sententia Synodalis licet non sit vera absolutè, est tamen vera Ecclesiasticè: Si in foro exteriore.*—Pag. 119. *Statuendum est ordinem publicum præserendum esse præcepto obedientiæ ergo præceptum affirmativum, non fundamentale.—Hîc obtinet illud (Amesii.) Gravissima incommoda faciunt aliquando ut præceptum affirmativum desinat obligare, quod alias non possit non observari sine peccato. Ordini igitur talis Ecclesia in hoc casu sese subjicere & potest & debet: sed tamen sine peccato.*—

Is not here enough for our Agreement in this Point? I should have feared Censures if I had said as much.

But I hope you deny not the Power of Christian Kings, nor that a Christian Soveraign and Christian Subjects are a Christian Kingdom, and *de nomine* may be called a National Church. And *Moses*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Josiah*, had a Governing Power over the Priests, though not to change the species of their Office. And if I and others think that Apostles and Evangelists have Successors to the End of the World in the ordinary parts of their Office, and in Superiority you may with Peace hold your Opinion and leave us to ours: Of which elsewhere.

Chap. X. *Difference* VIII.

THE Eighth supposed Difference is, about Private mens Preaching: and it hath two Parts. 1. Whether Private men, may Preach in the Church? 2. Whether the Church may send them out as private men unordained, to Preach in the Parishes of *England*, or to the Heathens or Unbelievers?

The Presbyterians deny not but Private men may Preach in some cases. None that fear God do desire any to bury their Talent, nor would hinder men from doing the Work of God. But they would have *bona bene*, God's Work done in God's Order. On these Conditions we allow Private men to Preach. 1. If they do it but *ex Charitate*, and pretend not to the Ministerial Office. 2. And if they do it *occasionally*, and not as men separated to that work as their Calling (for then they become Ministers indeed while they disclaim it in Name. 3. If they do it not *needlessly*, to a proud ostentation of their parts; but only when Abler Men, or Ministers are not to be had, or else on some urgent weighty cause. 4. If they make not themselves the Judges of their own fitness, but expect the Approbation of the judicious, faithful, concordant Ministers that know them. 5. If they undertake no more than they can perform, and suppose not themselves fitter than they are, and so run not beyond their Knowledge, nor dishonour not the Work of God. 6. If they thrust not themselves into any Church to Preach without a Call, nor ordinarily without the Pastors consent. 7. If they do it not unseasonably when by offending they are likely to do more hurt than good. 8. If in the manner, season and continuance they submit to the Guidance of the Pastors of the Church (if it be more than ordinary Teaching, and not such as every able Master of a Family may there do). With these Cautions we grant that Private men may Preach. Many Episcopal Divines grant it: And the Presbyterians ordinarily permit it in their Expectants that are trained up for the Ministery. A Maid begun the Conversion of the *Iberians* by Conference; And interlocutory Preaching is truly Preaching. *Edesius* and *Frumentius* converted the Indians. *Alexander* Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and *Theoctistus* of *Cæsaria*, maintained *Origen*'s Teaching while he was a Private man: and

and that in the Church before the Bishops. And when *Demetrius* of *Alexandria* reprehended them, affirming it to be an unknown case, that a Layman should preach in the presence of a Bishop, they gainsay him, and produce the Examples of *Neon* a Bishop that required *Euelpius* to teach, and of *Celsus* that set *Paulinus* to preach at *Iconium*, and of *Amicus* that set *Theodorus* to teach at *Synnadorum*. And, saith Dr. *Fulke*, *Demetrius* himself doth seem to allow, that when no Bishop was present, a Layman might preach, *Euseb. Hist. li. 6. c. 20.*

But that every proud unworthy Man, and every seducing Heretick, should preach, yea and thrust himself into other Mens Charges, or that any should preach besides the forementioned Rules, this we deny, and take it for a dangerous Usurpation.

But are we not agreed in this? Hear and Judge: Mr. *Cotton* so downright denieth ordinary private Men to Prophesie, interpreting 1 *Cor.* 14. 31. of extraordinarily Gifted Prophets (of which see his Keys, pag. 20, 21.) that Mr. *Goodwin* and Mr. *Nye* thought meet to signifie some Dissent, Pref. p. 6. And yet they grant, that this must be performed by private Men, [1. Only Occasionally, not in an ordinary Course. 2. By Men of such Abilities as are fit for Office. 3. And not assuming this of themselves, but judged such by those that have the power, and so allowed and designed to it. And, 4. So as their Doctrine be subjected (for the judging of it) in an especial manner, to the Teaching Elders of that Church.] And I think that this is enough to signifie, that here we shall have no cause of a breach with them. Mr. *Norton* speaks to the same purpose, pag. 123, 124, 125. and joins with Mr. *Cotton* in denying Prophesie to private Men, and expounding 1 *Cor.* 14. of extraordinarily Gifted Prophets only: In this therefore Doctrinally we agree.

2. But the second seemeth the more dangerous difference: That their Churches should presume to send abroad Preachers not in Office, for the Conversion of Souls, by setting them apart to that work, and directing or allowing them to be stated Ordinary Teachers. Their excuses are, that Pastors are proper to particular Churches; and it is not into Churches but Parishes that they send them; not to Rule or Teach a Church, but to Convert Souls and gather Churches. *Ans.* But, 1. It is not your calling Parishes [no Churches] that makes or proves them none. You are not the Judges, when they profess themselves Churches. If others send Men to preach in your Churches, it will not excuse them with you, if they face you down that they are no Churches, and therefore they may preach in them. 2. But suppose they were all Heathens, you have never yet proved that to be a stated Preacher for their Conversion, is not to be a proper Ministerial Officer. Contrarily, 1. In the days of the Apostles and all their helpers, it was part of the Office of a Minister, (yea and of the chief Ministers) to be stated Preachers for the Conversion of unbelievers, and gathering Souls to Christ: But the Office of the Ministry is now the same as then. Therefore

2. To go and Teach, and Disciple the Nations is as true a part of the Ministers Commission as to teach the Church (*Matth.* 28. 19.) Therefore it is not common to private Men.

3. Or,

3. Ordinary Baptizing is no work for private Men: Therefore not preaching. The reason of the conſequence is, 1. Becauſe they are conjoyned in the Miniſterial Commiſſion, (*Matth.* 28. 19.) 2. Becauſe if Paſtors go not abroad the World with theſe private Men to preach to Infidels, then when they have converted any, they muſt be unbaptized till Paſtors can come to them: Which is contrary to all Scripture example that Baptiſm ſhould be ſo long delayed after Converſion ordinarily.

4. To be *ſeparated to the Goſpel of God*, is a chief part of the deſcription of a Miniſter (by Office) *Rom.* 1. 1. But theſe private Preachers are by the Churches ſeparated to the Goſpel of God (by right or by wrong) therefore they are made Miniſters by Office. Indeed the firſt object of the true Miniſterial Office (in order of nature) is the uncalled World; and the calling of them is as Eminent a part of their Office as preaching to a Church.

This is the moſt Eminent Evangelizing, to declare the Glad-tydings of Salvation to the World: And this is the preaching that requireth ſending, *Rom.* 10. On this work were the Twelve and the Seventy ſent: on this work ſpecially did the Apoſtles lay out themſelves. And not only they, but *Apollo, Luke, Mark, Timothy, Titus, Silas*, and abundance of the chieſeſt Miniſters of Chriſt.

But yet we have no matter to excuſe a Diviſion or Alienation, from this Difference. For, 1. I cannot prove it a Difference between the Parties: For I know not that the Congregational Party have owned and eſpouſed the Opinion which I here oppoſe; though ſome particular perſons do: And therefore I do not charge it on them. 2. If they did, yet Infidels are ſo far from us, that irregular endeavours to Convert them, will be no matter of a breach: And were we nearer them, we might leave others to practiſe according to their Judgments, as long as we are not guilty of the Error. 3. They do not pretend to force themſelves into our Pariſh Churches (ordinarily) againſt his will that is the allowed Teacher there. 4. While they do in Name diſclaim Ordaining them, they actually Ordain them. For they ſet them apart to the Office of the Miniſtry, and it is Paſtors that do it: And this is the ſubſtance of Ordination: Impoſition of Hands is but the Inveſting Ceremony. And if they ſay that *A ſtated Preacher is no Officer*, that makes him not to *be none*: And if they ſay, that they Ordain him not when they Approve and Appoint him by an Inſtrument to that Office, that makes it not to be no Ordaining; no more than if they ſhould Appoint Men to a Paſtoral Charge, in one of their own Churches, and ſay, It is no Office, or Ordination. 5. And when the peoples conſent is afterward added, the Man is more fully ſeparated to the Work. 6. But however, as long as they allow us our liberty of Ordination, and thruſt none upon our Communion as Paſtors that are no Paſtors, we have no pretence to make this a ſtop to our Communion. Let us cloſe together, and paſs this by, and God will further inform us, and diſpel our darkneſs when we walk together in holy Love and Peace.

Chap.

Chap. XI. *Difference* IX.

THE Ninth ſeeming Difference is, about our Pariſhes in *England*, whether they are true Churches of Chriſt, or not. But here is little or no difference that is ſtood to whatever any particular perſons may think, it is not a difference between the parties. For, 1. It is not deſired of them to grant that a Pariſh as a Pariſh (that is, the people, yea the Chriſtians inhabiting ſuch a ſpace of ground) is a Church. It's poſſible they may be of many Churches, or of none (but the Univerſal.) 2. Nor is it deſired that they take every Member of the Pariſh, no nor every Hearer, for a Member of the Church. Men of ſeveral Churches, or of no Church may live in the Pariſh, and hear together. 3. Nor are they deſired to take any Pariſh for a true Political Church that hath not a true Paſtor, with a competent number of profeſſed Chriſtians joined together for perſonal Communion in Gods Worſhip.

But that our ordinary Pariſhes in *England* that have true Miniſters are true Churches is ſo familiarly granted by the Congregational party, that to recite their words ſeems needleſs: And therefore they utterly diſclaim ſeparating from us as no true Churches. 1. That our want of a Church Covenant nullifieth not theſe Churches, I told you before they grant, becauſe our conſent is our Covenant: And our ordinary practice tolerably ſignifieth that conſent. Saith Mr, *Norton*, p. 21. [*Si una externa fidei profeſſione, veritatis & ſanctitatis praxi, eodem baptiſmate uniantur, & eundem publicum cultum uno in loco frequentent, iiſdem inſpectoribus Eccleſiæ ſubſint, &c.*] See the place, where he acknowledgeth this a Church without an Explicit Covenant.

2. And that the impiety of our Pariſhes, or other incapacity of the Members is not ſuch as to nullifie our Churches they confeſs. Becauſe a good Church may have ſome bad Members: And where the greater number are bad, the Paſtor and the better (ſmaller) part may denominate the Church, and it may be true, though polluted. What Doctrinal and Practical Corruptions were in the Churches of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and divers of the *Aſian* Churches, *Rev.* 2. and 3. is ſo plain, and hath been ſo often mentioned that it's needleſs to recite the Texts. Saith Mr. *Norton*, 28, 29. *Immo tantum abeſt, ut ob defectum fœderis expliciti (ſalva vel ungulæ religione in rebus Jeſu Chriſti) ullas Congregationes ex Eccleſiarum albo expungamus; ut Cœtus multò graviora paſſos, eſſentialibus Dei gratia adhuc in tuto poſitis tanquam non Eccleſias judicare, ſalvâ conſcientiâ nullos poſſe, ſanctè teſtemur. Diſtinguendum inter Eccleſiam puram, impuram, impuriſſimam, & nullam. — Fundamentalia ſive Eſſentialia ſunt materia & forma Eccleſiæ particularis. Materia ſunt homines profitentes Doctrinam ſalutaris fidei: Forma eſt mutuus conſenſus politicus ad incedendum in illa fide, vel verbis, vel factis, modo aliquo viſibiliter ſignificatus:*

Adeo ut non ſufficit ſubitanea aliqua conjunctio, & ſanctæ communionis exercitium, ad Eccleſiam conſtituendam, niſi conſtantia illa accedat, ſaltem quoad intentionem, quæ ſtatum adfert Corporis & Membrorum in ſpirituali quadam politia: Qualem conſenſum nos fœdus vocare jam toties diximus.]

As this proveth our Pariſhes true Churches, ſo that greater corruptions than the Vices of ſome, even Fundamental Errors in the Church it ſelf, doth not preſently deſtroy the Church is his Opinion, and *Parker*'s cited by him: *Ibid.* ſaith he, [*Neque tamen Eccleſiam errores fundamentales ſtatim deſtruunt, donec eis addatur contumacia in foro exteriori. Eccleſia in fundamento aberrans tamdiu manet Eccleſia quamdiu non eſt pertinax.*]

Certainly here is as large a judgment of Charity as we can reaſonably expect, and ſo large as without ſome diſtinction, will be liable to controverſie.

We eaſily confeſs that moſt of our Churches need much Reformation, and that all in our Pariſhes are not Church Members: But yet I may well ſuppoſe that we are Agreed that thoſe of them that have true Paſtors are true Churches, and that this is the caſe of our Pariſhes ordinarily, or very many at leaſt (yea ſome ſuch Diſſenters think that they may be true Churches without Paſtors) ſo that here between the parties there is no diſagreement, whatever particular perſons hold. Many are more afraid leſt a great many Pariſhes ſhould be *Made* no true Churches (in a Political ſenſe) by ſetting over them ſuch as are no true Miniſters, than be *proved* none before they are made *None*. But I ſee no danger of this, while we have liberty of Election and Ordination.

Chap. XII. *Difference* X.

THE Tenth Controverſie, is about, 1. Taking Members out of other Churches. 2. And ſeparating from the Pariſh Churches, by gathering out of them a ſelect number to be a diſtinct Church.

And here there is a Practical Difference to our woe: But in order to Reconcilement, I ſhould hope that I might ſuppoſe our Agreement in all the other points of Difference to be ſufficient, and that being ſatisfied in thoſe the Brethren that have been for *withdrawing from* our Churches, will be ſatisfied to join with us for their Reformation, and not do as they have ſome of them done. For we have therefore come as near them as we can in the reſt, that they might have no juſt occaſion to depart from us: And if that yet they will depart, when the offence is removed, then it would be as if they ſhould ſay, We are againſt Concord and Unity as ſuch: And our Judgment for Diviſion as ſuch, that is, for Dividing without cauſe. When we have anſwered all that our Brethren alledge for their withdrawing, we may expect that they ſhould return to an Orderly Communion. This Controverſie is *de fine*, and ſeeing we

grant

grant them much in the reſt *for this*, therefore we cannot grant them this: If in War we grant all that is deſired for Peace, it is ſuppoſed that we will not grant the continuance of the War; nor in reaſon muſt that be one of the demands.

I ſpeak all this but of unjuſt Separations: For there is a Separation which we are all agreed to be lawful (as far as I know) as, 1. We all agree that where Chriſtians live in the midſt of Infidels, they muſt come out from among them (by Faith and Repentance) and be ſeparated (by the Baptiſmal Engagement firſt, and the Communion of Saints after) and not touch the unclean thing. The Church muſt be ſeparated from the World, or it is no Church.

2. We are agreed that when a true Church Viſibly ceaſeth to be a true Church, by loſs of its Eſſentials ſtatedly, it is our Duty to judge it to be no true Church (that is but to judge it as it is) and forſake it accordingly.

3. When we cannot hold local Communion with a true Church without committing ſome ſin, which they would force upon us, and which we may eſcape by leaving them, we ought to withdraw from the local Communion of that Church (for we muſt not wilfully ſin, nor do evil that good may come by it:) Yet ſo as that ſtill we muſt hold Internal, and alſo *External* diſtant Communion, by owning them as a true Church, and correſponding with them as a Neighbour Church.

4. If a *true Church* in the *corruption of the Materials* become uncapable of its *Ends*, and we have with ſufficient patience tryed the means of its Reformation without ſucceſs, it is ordinarily (unleſs ſome greater matter hinder accidentally) our Duty to forſake it: Yea and to eſteem it no more a true Church, if it be the *Principal Ends* that it's become uncapable of. As if the Body were fallen into an Opinion againſt *Communion and Publick Worſhip*, and yet ſhould think they might hold their Relations: This were a contradiction. If they would in Publick, worſhip God with a Worſhip falſe in the Eſſentials, and which is no Church-worſhip, but Impiety or Deceit. And though I will not now determine how far Diſcipline is neceſſary to a Church, more than to ſay that the *Power* is Eſſential to the Paſtors Office, yet I may boldly conclude that in point of Duty, if a Church be ſo corrupted by Hereſie or Impiety that Diſcipline cannot be exerciſed in it, becauſe the greater part do own the Hereſie or Sin, or the Sinners in their Sin, and this be not in one or a few Acts, but they are againſt the courſe of Diſcipline in the main, and Vote for *Wickedneſs*, or againſt Piety, or the publick Cenſures of the Church, or refuſe to execute them; and if after ſufficient patience I cannot reform them, I ſhall take it to be my Duty to take with me the better part of the Church, and forſake the reſt, as to local Communion, and perhaps firſt to caſt them out from us (as to their Relation) though we are the leſſer part: Unleſs in ſome caſes, where *Publick Good* requireth a delay, and ſuſpendeth my Duty for the time.

5. If a Paſtor be deſpiſed by the Church, and refuſed, or if they deſire his ſtay, and yet wilfully diſobey him, and his Labours are unprofitable among

them, that are like to be profitable elſewhere, we doubt not but he may remove, as being rejected and forſaken firſt by them.

6. If a Paſtor and ſome choice Members with him have a Call to a far more Eminent Service of God, conducing much more to the publick Good, we doubt not but they may remove, though the reſt diſſent. God is the Maſter of his Miniſters and people more than Men are.

7. If the Neceſſities of a Mans Family (Miniſters or people) require him to remove his Habitation, I doubt not but he may remove, though the Church diſſent: unleſs in ſome Caſes where by accident his removal may more diſhonour God, or hinder publick Good, than his Eſtate or the preſervation of his Family can countervail: The Church hath not power to tye Men to Ruine their Families, nor to continue with them during Life, nor during their pleaſure: Nor is it implied in the conſent of Membership, which is to be no more, but that [I will hold Communion with this Church as a Member, while I here Cohabit, or I have no call from God to remove.] It is ſo in Civil Corporations: Cohabitation is an antecedent part of our Aptitude for Church Communion; and many juſt Cauſes may deprive us of that Aptitude, and make the perſons to be *materia indiſpoſita & incapax*, and ſo deſtroy his Relation of it ſelf.

8. If perſons that have a weak Paſtor, or a corrupt Society, can to the great advantage of their Souls remove, they may do it whether the Church will conſent or not, in caſe their removal do not accidentally do more hurt againſt the honour of God, and the publick Good, than their profit can countervail: And ſtill ſuppoſing, that the Churches conſent be firſt orderly ſought.

9. The ſame I ſay of them that have Paſtors that will not exerciſe any competent Diſcipline, though with ſufficient patience importuned thereunto.

In one word, in no caſe is a Man bound to ſtay with any Church to the certain prejudice or danger of his Soul, or the Souls of his Family, unleſs in the foreſaid caſe, (if ſuch a caſe there be) when the publick Good and the Cauſe of God will receive more detriment by our removal than our benefit will countervail.

10. Laſtly, If we be unjuſtly caſt out of any Church, and perſecuted by them, and have no juſt redreſs at home, no doubt but we may joyn with another Church. As if a Paſtor that is for Rebaptizing would take none but who will be Rebaptized, or having taken ſome in, will caſt them out: Or if a Paſtor be ſet over us, of an uncharitable Spirit, that will take in none for Godly but thoſe of his Opinion, or ſome few of a higher Form, and denieth Communion to all the reſt, in this caſe it is he that doth the wrong, and they are neceſſitated to join with another Church, that will receive them; and another Church may juſtly receive them, if firſt they cannot prevail for their reception at home.

All this we grant for a removal from a Church without the guilt of Schiſm or ſinful Separation. But on the other ſide we muſt needs deſire, 1. That Men will not raſhly and ſelf-conceitedly judge any of theſe Caſes to be where they are not: And therefore that they will take the advice of the next unanimous,

nimous, peaceable, faithful Paſtors. And for this, ſaith Mr. *Norton*, p. 167. [But when this or that Congregation is to be taken for No Church, let the judgment be in the hands of a Council, or in an Ordinate ſtate of the Churches.]

2. We deſire that whole Churches may not be taken for no Churches without proof, nor before they are heard ſpeak for themſelves: And that thoſe that have poſſeſſion of the publick Maintenance and Temples, (I know no fitter Name for them), will not gather a part of the people into a new Church, as if there were none before, till it be proved upon equal hearing: Nor that they would not Diſſolve the old Church, inſtead of Reforming it, nor withdraw from them, inſtead of caſting out the unfit in an orderly way of Diſcipline; unleſs where Diſcipline and Reformation cannot be had: If we propoſe the exerciſe of Diſcipline to a Pariſh, and the moſt will rather diſown (or refuſe to own) their Relations as Members, than live under Diſcipline, and ſo Separate themſelves from us, (or profeſs that they never took themſelves for Members) then the blame will lye on them, and they are the Separatiſts: But if they *Own* their Relations, and offer to live as Chriſtians under Diſcipline, in holy Communion, ſurely they muſt be caſt out upon proved accuſations, Man by Man, in Chriſts way, *Matth.* 18. or not at all. I confeſs by drawing out a few from the reſt, we may ſcape a great deal of labour, trouble, and ill will of thoſe that ſhould be caſt out: But the ſelfiſh, eaſie way is not like to be the way of God.

3. We deſire that Paſtors that preach the Faith, may not be the loweſt in Charity, nor uncharitably cenſure all thoſe as ungodly and unfit for Church Communion, that want but diſtinct Conceptions, and fit Expreſſions, through the lowneſs or neglect of their Education; or that are not able, to be the mouth of a Family in Prayer, while they are willing to perform the Duty, if they could, and to learn that they may perform it: And that the weak in Faith may be received, and the little ones ſuffered to come to Chriſt, even all that are willing to give up themſelves to him, and of thoſe that ſo come to him none may in any wiſe be rejected, or caſt out till they turn from Chriſt and the Holy Covenant: That the Lambs may be carried in our Arms, and the bruiſed Reed may not be broken; and that the tenderneſs of Chriſt to the leaſt of his Members may be remembred, and the price of Souls, and our own former weakneſs; and alſo how much more grievous it ſhould be to us, to keep or caſt out one of our weak Brethren that Chriſt would have received, than to let in many intruding Hypocrites, who ſhall be made ſerviceable to the Church, and their Masks ſhall be our juſt excuſe, though not their own: And ſpecially remember that it is Chriſt that is the Lord of the Family, and we are but Servants, and therefore we muſt take all our directions from him, and ſhut out none but thoſe that we are ſure he would have ſhut out: And remember that in doubtful caſes, we are allowed to incline to the more charitable ſide. Force not Men unjuſtly by refuſing them, to ſeek acceptance in other Churches.

Though I intended at firſt more brevity than will conſiſt with long citati-

ons,

ons, I ſhall recite a few words of Judicious Mr. *Noyes* of *New-England*: Temple meaſured, p. 63, 64. ſaith he, *No Wheat muſt be pulled up with the Tares, the Tares muſt rather be tolerated — that Rule which requireth more than is neceſſary in the weakeſt Believer, muſt needs exclude the called of God: And that Rule which neceſſarily or abſolutely requireth unneceſſary Experiences, ſavorineſs of Speech, ſuitableneſs of Spirit to our tempers, perſuaſion of ſound Converſion, &c. ſuch a Rule I ſay requires much more than is neceſſary or competible to the weakeſt Believer. To require a perſuaſion in our Hearts of the Converſion of all that are admitted, is too much; unleſs we can meet with a Rule, that will admit all Saints, and alſo afford ſuch a perſuaſion. It will contradict the Rule of our admiſſion, to make our apprehenſions part of the Rule. Our fancies are a leaden Rule; and if we are ſevere, and have no certain Rule to regulate us, we ſhall exclude the weak more often than we ſhall receive them. 4. The loweſt degree of abſolute probability that a perſon is converted ſhould be ſatisfactory. The weakeſt Chriſtians are to be received,* Rom. 14. 1. *and the weakeſt can hold forth no more than the leaſt degree of an abſolute probability; the ſtrongeſt can hold forth no more than the higheſt degree of probability. Again, either the higheſt, or the loweſt, or ſome middle degree of probability is requiſite: The higheſt is not: And what rule is there for ſome middle degree? If it be not in our power to require a Years experience for more degrees of probability, why a Months experience?*]

I have elſewhere proved that the true condition (which Mr. *N.* here calls the *Rule*) is nothing but [A CREDIBLE PROFESSION] and that it being to be received upon a Humane Belief, that hath a fallible object, [IT IS TO BE TAKEN FOR A CREDIBLE PROFESSION, WHICH CANNOT BE PROVED FALSE OR INCREDIBLE.] This is the Scripture-way, and this is the ancient way of the Churches: And if you will needs on either hand forſake theſe Terms, I preſume to Prognoſticate, you ſhall but wrong your Brethren, and your Souls, and the Church and Chriſt, and bewilder your ſelves, and make work for Repentance. With confidence after long conſideration and diſputing the point I ſpeak it. But I return to Mr. *Noyes*.

Page 64. [*The Practiſe of the Apoſtles,* Acts 2, *&c. muſt confine our prudence: They were better directed and inſtructed than we are: And they expected no Teſtimony, nor a days experience: They could not in ſo ſhort a time make any Inquiſitions, or hear any perſwaſive relations. The youngeſt Converts muſt be inſtantly imbraced: Therefore ſome days of Experience or Teſtimonies are not neceſſary. Some are ignorant and of an arid Conſtitution and Expreſſion: Therefore an explicit ſavour of Language is not equally requiſite in all — The Apoſtolical Rule was large: It ſuffered many corrupt Members to creep in — None, as far as we read, were put by: Yet Converts were many, young, ignorant, rude; and Converſions were ſudden and paſſionate — If ample relations of the work of Grace be neceſſary, then either for ſatisfaction or for edification. Not for ſatisfaction, as hath been proved: Not for edification — For,* 1. *Would it not be as profitable for all Members to come about again at certain ſeaſons?* 2. *Such*

relations

relations do uncover the nakedneſs of Brethren and Fathers. 3. *They ſlander ſuch as are not Gifted; ſuch as cannot expreſs themſelves in good language.* 4. *Pride is ſet on the ſtage in the Houſe of God.* 5. *Hypocrites are provoked to paint and act themſelves.* 6. *Such relations are known to afflict the afflicted, who came to us, and with us in love, and we here hide our Faces from them.* 7. *The eloquent, and ſuch as have Athletick conſtitutions carry away undeſerved reſpect from Countrey Chriſtians.* Materiam ſuperabat opus. *Hence iſſue compariſons: Nay we foſter, (inſtead of preventing) ſuſpicious partiality.* 8. *Young Men exalt themſelves over the Faith of their Ancients.* 9. *Some are ſent to their Graves fruſtrate of their hopes, we being in a way to admit no more in many years, than were admitted by the Apoſtles in one day* — 10. *To grieve ſuch as ought to be comforted, to defame ſuch as deſerve honour, to judge one another for infirmities, is unjuſt.* Rom. 14. *The Apoſtle thought it juſt to think well of all,* Phil. 1. 17, *&c.* — *The Apoſtles were diligent and faithful in directing and exhorting, and rebuking: And why are they then ſo ſilent in point of admiſſion? Yea when the Churches were corrupted, and peſtered with corrupt Members, ſuch as made their Bellies their Gods,* Phil. 3. Jude 4. 1 Cor. 15. and 13. *Surely admiſſion hath never been deemed in the Churches ſo momentous as with us: And yet we commit it to the diſſident and multiformous fancies of Members, without a Rule* — *The Apoſtles were never acquainted with thoſe Queſtions,* [*How, when, where, and whereby, and by whom Converſion was wrought?*] *The Church is a tender Mother,* Cant. 7. *and ſpeedily embraceth her Infant by admiſſion into her Arms, and layeth it to her Breaſts of conſolations. Experience telleth us that a Man will not eaſily make Proteſtations before God, and ſubject himſelf to Diſcipline, unleſs it be reſolved with him. If it be reſolved, he ſhall be ſaved* — *Happy is he that is reſolved to flee from the wrath to come, to the Ark, to Zoar, to the Cities of Refuge: And open we the Gate readily (without many expoſtulations) to reſcue him from the avenger of Blood: Yea the way is to be made eaſie to encourage him to come. We muſt not have ſuch a Rule of admiſſion, as may in an ordinary way diſinherit Saints of their Right and Priviledges in the Kingdom of God.*] So far Mr. *Noyes.*

3. We crave, and expect our Brethrens conſent, that we may not have the Goſpel hindered through the Land, by unneceſſary ſinful private Antichurches: That every Town or City where are Men profeſſing Godlineſs, may not be as a pitcht Field; and holy Exerciſes turned into Contendings; nor Chriſtian Aſſemblies turned into Schools of War, or ſcolding places. Let us not be many Maſters, leſt we receive the greater condemnation. The wiſdom from above is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, eaſie to be intreated, *&c.* where envying and ſtriſe is there is confuſion and every evil work. This wiſdom deſcendeth not from above, but is earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh.] *Jam.* 3. Let us agree then to do what lyeth in our power, that the Churches may be reduced to the Primitive patterns, that met all in One place, and there were of one Heart and Soul. Where find you in all the Scriptures, that there were two diſtinct Churches, (eſpecially diſtinguiſhed or divided by differences) in one

one City; and that when for the number they might have joyned in one? Where find you that the worſt Church had any good men that ſeparated from it into a diſtinct Church in that place? Is Scripture our common Rule? I beſeech you then be able well to reſolve theſe Queſtions, before you venture in your practice to contradict the word. If we drive you from our Churches cauſeleſsly, the Shame be on us! But if you cauſeleſsly depart into Antichurches, the blame ſhall lye on you. Do not ſtagger and confound our poor People, by ſhewing them in each Town, Miniſter againſt Miniſter, and Church againſt Church; and entice not young Novices into an opinionative Religiouſneſs, and draw not the Nation from the Power of Godlineſs, and Practice of Charity, into doting about Queſtions.

4. For order ſake, let Pariſhes be the ordinary bounds of Churches; not ſo as if all in the Pariſh, are therefore of the Church, but ſo as that ordinarily we take none out of others Pariſhes. Let us not do it without juſt cauſe; nor do it when it will tend more to publick hurt, than any perſons good can compenſate. If you could prove Pariſhes no Churches, yet they that Preach to them for their Converſion, *cæteris paribus*, are fitteſt to be their Guides, when they are converted. Tell us if you can, wherever you found one inſtance in Scripture or the Primitive times, of one Soul that forſook the Church that was Congregated in the City of his Habitation, and was a Member of any other Church, in a place where he dwelt not; Except the Hereticks that *Jude* ſaith did [ſeparate themſelves, being ſenſual, having not the ſpirit] whoſe manner it was to forſake the Aſſemblies, *Heb.* 10. 25. *Cohabitation* is requiſite to the Ends of Churches, even the exerciſe of Communion, and the offices of Members one towards another. How can we watch over men that live out of our reach? How know we what their converſation is?

But eſpecially when a Pariſh hath a faithful Miniſter, that undertaketh to prove the Members that you receive to be part of his Paſtoral Charge or Church, it will no more warrant any man irregularly to receive them, becauſe he affirms that it is no Church, or they no Members, than ſuch an Affirmation concerning your own Churches or Members will warrant others to receive your Members.

5. And that juſtice may be exerciſed, and order obſerved, let no Member remove till he have ſought the Conſent of the Church where he is, or heard them give their Reaſons againſt it: And let none be received from another Church or Pariſh, but either upon Communicatory Letters or Certificates, or elſe after a juſt diſcuſſion of the Cauſe with the Church or Teachers from whom they do withdraw.

6. And as it is agreeable to our ſeveral Principles, and the great thing that is now deſired, that we may all correſpond in Brotherly Aſſociations, and have Synods at fit Seaſons for the Communion of the Churches that are link'd together; let us there be Reſponſible (not as to our Governours, but as to Aſſociated Brethren, and Churches), for our Actions that are of Publick offence, or of which we ſhall be there accuſed; and in particular for this, of taking Members out of other Churches, that the Cauſe may have an equal hearing. 7.

7. Or if any of you shall refuse to meet in constant Synods, yet do this much at least: Let your Churches and ours be so far Consociate as to Own each other for true Churches, (though we take the Liberty to disown any notable Distemper that we may see each other guilty of), and let Communicatory Letters be necessary for any that be received from one Church to another, unless in special cases: And deny not to appear at least on such an extraordinary occasion at a Synod, to satisfie the Churches when you are accused.

8. And let us agree on such Rules for the peaceable management of our remaining Differences, as are necessary to the Security of the common Truths, and the common cause of Christianity and Piety which we own, that we hinder not God's Work, and harden not the Ungodly, and weaken not each others hands, and prove not at last the unwise Destroyers of the Church, and Betrayers of the Gospel and our Liberties to the Enemies, by our obstinate Divisions and Contentions. If the worst be supposed of a resolved distance (which we dare not be so uncharitable as to suppose) we may yet expect an Agreement to such terms as are here after *offered* to the Anabaptists.

If yet it be insisted on by any, that [by holding Communion with us in Synods, and being there responsible for offences, you shall be proceeded against to a Non-Communion]: I further answer, 1. Will you *choose* a Non-Communion to escape it? yea, to escape a possibility of it? And shall it be by *your own* act and guilt, lest it should be by other mens? 2. Again, I tell you, they can declare their avoiding your Communion whether you Associate or not: And will have the more occasion, when you wilfully divide and refuse to be responsible, than when you live among them as Brethren in Charitable Correspondencies and Communion, and walk in order. And there will be far more probability that things will be carried on against you in their Synods, in your absence, than in your presence, when you speak for your selves. 3. They will allow you in any of the ten fore-allowed Cases to take Members out of other Parishes and Churches, and also out of all those Parishes that have no tolerable Pastors, or where the People have any warrantable cause to depart; yea, in case the person will but remove his Habitation, they will not contend (though he do it causelesly.) (And surely the Publick Order and Peace of the Churches, is of greater moment than the Riches and worldly Accommodations of a particular man: and therefore in most cases reason it self will tell us that it is fitter such incur some incommodity by removing their Habitations, than that the Church incure damnage by their breaking Order, and crossing all the Scripture Presidents, where men were ever Members of the Church that was in the Places where they lived, or next to them, and *there* none but Hereticks had Antichurches, or separated Assemblies). Moreover, if you do disorderly receive any Members out of other Churches, the Brethren associated may by Evidence of Reason satisfie and reduce you; If they do not so, they will understand on what account you do it; and so if it be but on some tolerable Mistake or Infirmity, they will be satisfied in the disowning your Sin, without disowning your Communion. But if it be on an intolerable ground, and

such as signifieth you to be uncapable of their Communion (as if you should cherish Heresie or Ungodliness, and cast out men for sound Belief and Piety), they can but in the extremity declare you uncapable of their Communion, and warn your People to take heed of you; and so they can do, whether you associate or not.

So that I may conclude, 1. That difference in Practice will necessitate a Toleration of Pastors taking Members in certain cases, out of other Parishes.

2. But differences in any *Principles* between the several Parties will occasion none, if we could exactly practise our own Principles.

1. That difference in Practice will is evident: 1. Because it is impossible that all men of the same Parties should have the same degrees of Prudence, Moderation, Charity, Zeal, *&c.* which will make some to exclude abundance of persons that others of the same Party will admit. 2. Because if the Pastor should be moderate, he cannot promise that his Congregation will be so: And if they too rigorously refuse any Members, he is not able alone to retain them. 3. And if abundance of tolerable Christians be refused, there is no reason that for the rigour of others, they should wholly be deprived of the Communion of the Church, and the Ordinances of God. I easily foresee, that whoever was first guilty of it, it is the more Charitable Churches that will be put most upon the receiving of Members out of other Parishes: For the *uncharitable* will take perhaps an Hundred, and leave out and reject two Hundred of their Parishioners that should be accepted: And then the next adjoyning Church cannot conscionably refuse their Entertainment.

But let us have these three Points at least agreed on, 1. That the Neighbour Pastors and Churches may be consulted with and heard, before such rejections be made, or at least afterward upon the Complaint of the rejected. 2. That those that are refused in one Parish, joyn with the Publick Church in the next, and that, without necessity, they do not either draw into private Churches, nor yet joyn themselves to publick Churches so distant, as are uncapable of holding such Communion with them as Church-ends require. 3. And that the Neighbour Pastors do not promiscuously receive all that are rejected by the Publick Pastor at home; but only such as upon just tryal are found fit.

Q. But what shall the people of the Parish do that are put upon such straits, as to joyn with another Parish far off, because they have a Minister at home that refuseth them (as possibly an Anabaptist that requireth them to be rebaptized, or an uncharitable rejecter of all except such as have voluble Tongues, *&c.*)

Answ. 1. He that is chosen to be the Pastor, is chosen to the Pastoral work, and therefore is trusted with the oversight and government of the Church: which must not be taken out of the Pastors hands, because of the Miscarriages of some. 2. But this must be prevented in the choice. Patrons must choose none but Prudent Pious men, that will not intolerably wrong the Church: And the Approvers must let no others in. But if Patrons or People choose such men, and the Approvers let them in, there's no Remedy, but shift for your-

ſelves, unleſs you can get them out again. 3. If therefore they be ſo groſly injurious, procure the Magiſtrates to puniſh ſuch for maleadminiſtration: For to them it doth belong: (Though it ſhould be a very groſs and proved abuſe that muſt warrant them to puniſh the Paſtors.) Let the Cauſe be heard, and the Commiſſioners have Power to remove them, if after warning they are incurable. 4. And if the Magiſtrates will not do ſo, but keep them in, all that the Neighbour Churches can do, is to hear the Caſe, and if it be groſs and intolerable, to diſclaim Communion with them, and receive ſuch Chriſtians as the uncharitable do reject. This is all that can be done. But the beſt way is to be careful in the Choice. For it is an intolerable courſe that ſome are harping on, that Paſtors ſhould not be truſted with Church Guidance and Adminiſtrations (that is, to do the work of Paſtors), any further than Magiſtrates make them Rules, becauſe they may poſſibly be too imprudent, or injurious to the People. Surely as long as the Patrons or People chooſe, and the Magiſtrate Guards the Door, and alſo may puniſh or reject maleadminiſtrators as the Cauſe requireth, there needs no more.

2. And that difference in Principles between the Parties as thus principled cannot be here a cauſe to break us, I ſhall further evince, when I have given you the Confeſſions of the Independent Brethren; which I ſhall do in Mr. *Norton's* words Engliſhed: *Pag.* 156, 157, &c. Cap. 16. [*A Believer may lawfully adjoyn himſelf into the Communion of that Church, in which he cannot enjoy all God's Ordinances: or in which ſome Corruption is tolerated in God's Publick Worſhip without due Reformation; or when ſuch are admitted to the participation of Sacraments, that give no evident ſigns or works of Repentance and Faith, but in many things hold forth the love of the World: and if he joyn himſelf to ſuch a Church, he is not therefore involved in guilt, and defiled with the impurities of others; nor muſt he therefore depart, that is, ſeparate from ſuch a Church.—Schiſm is an unlawful Separation from the Communion of the Church: it's always a great Sin.*] *This he proveth* Pag. 158, &c. 1. *In caſe of inculpable want of Ordinances*: 2. *Of culpable want by Negligence*; 3. *Of culpable want by refuſal of God's Ordinances*: *ſaith he* [*In the Jewiſh Church God's Ordinances could not be enjoyed: for the Prieſts and Elders rejected, not only* John, *but the Doctrine and Baptiſm of* John: *and yet it was then lawful for men to joyn themſelves to them*, Matth. 21. 25. *The Scribes rejected* John's *Baptiſm*, Mark 11. 27, 31. *and yet the Scribes ſitting in* Moſes *Chair are to be heard*, Mat. 23. 2, 3. *the hearing of whom, ſuch as is meant in that place, importeth a Conjunction to the Jewiſh Church.*

By comparing a Church that tolerateth the rejection of an Article of Faith, with a Church rejecting an Ordinance of God. A temporary rejection of an Article of Faith tolerated in a Church is a greater evil, than the rejection of ſome Ordinance. In the Church of Corinth *many denyed and derided the Reſurrection of the Dead; and this Corruption is tolerated in the Church, and yet in the Reformation of that Church, the Apoſtle doth neither preſently forbid Union with the Church, nor Command Separation from the Church. In the Churches of*

Galatia the rejection of the Doctrine of Justification by Faith was tolerated at least: there being such as judged that beside Faith, Moral and Ceremonial Works were necessary to Salvation: which other Doctrine he calls another Gospel, Gal. 1. 6. But this was a greater evil than not to have granted the Enjoyment of some Ordinance: and yet they did not therefore cease to be Churches.

And therefore it was yet lawful to be a Member in a Galatian, much more in the Corinthian Church, and consequently they were not bound under the guilt of Sin, to present Separation, but might with a good Conscience in their Station yet expect a Reformation: And why might not a man in the same hope with a safe Conscience adjoyn himself either to the Galatian Churches, or that at Corinth, even in that time of their Defection? especially if an opportunity of Communion with other Churches were shut up?

2. We say, that a Believer may lawfully adjoyn himself into the Communion of that Church in which some Corruption in God's Publick Worship, is tolerated without due Reformation.

The Children of Israel going a Whoring, Judg. 8. 27. after the Ephod set up by Gideon, was a tolerated Corruption of worship. The custom of Sacrificing in the high Places, from the days of Solomon, till the times of Hezekiah, was a tolerated Corruption in Publick Worship. The same is to be judged of the Translation of the Passover, to the following next Sabbath, lest they should feast on two days together. Which Translation appeareth in the Paschal Observation by Christ, different from the Jews Observation. The wrong Ministry of the Scribes and Pharisees sitting in Moses Chair, was such a corruption: for the Chair of Moses, that is, the office of publick teaching Moses Law, and the Books of the Prophets in the Church was by God's institution ordinarily proper to the Priests and Levites: yet Christ commandeth to hear them, but not to separate from them. To this may be added the observation of Circumcision and the Ceremonial Law after Christ's resurrection, and with an opinion of necessity to Salvation, Gal. 4. 21. 10. & 5. 2. But all these were corruptions in God's publick Worship tolerated without due Reformation. And who in those times did judge either the Churches Union to be Not-lawful, or Non-separation to be unlawful? To one bears witness the Pious Practice of so many Proselites coming to the Church, and of the Church receiving them: to the other, the very state of the Godly remaining in the Church.

By comparing the Corruption in an Article of Faith, with Corruption in Publick Worship, &c.] Here he repeateth the Argument forecited, adding [P. 161. It is the Duty of every Believer to adjoyn himself to some Church: By adjoyning our selves to the Church, we adjoyn not our selves to the impurities of the Church. A believer joyning himself to a Church not pure, specially when he cannot enjoy a purer, sinneth not. The sin of the Church exempteth not a Believer from Duty, which may be performed without sin or grievous incommodity. As some corruption of the Communicants must not drive away from the Supper, a Believer prepared worthily to Eat. So neither must some corruption in the Church drive away the faithful from Union with that Church.

3. Believers

3. *Believers may joyn themselves lawfully into the Communion of that Church, in which such are admitted to partake of the Sacraments, that hold forth no evident Signs or Works of Repentance and Faith, but shew in many things the love of the World.*

1. *Whatever others do, it is the Duty of every Member at Age, to examine themselves, and so to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* 2. *The Sin of one cannot deprive another Brother (that communicateth not in his Sin) of his Benefit, much less absolve him from his Duty.* 3. *If trying our selves and coming worthily as much as in us lyeth, we do in our Places endeavour by lawful means that the old leaven may be purged out, and we may be a new lump; the Communion is not defiled by other mens coming unworthily, though our comfort be diminished.*——*The Church of* Corinth *was not pure in Worship: Women spake, that is, taught in the Church. It was corrupt in Doctrine, many denied the Resurrection of the Dead. Most corrupt in Manners; when besides Fornication, Sects, and many other Vices, some also shewed the love of the World, whence strifes before Heathen Judges about corporal things. Yet the Apostle commands not the prepared to abstain from the Supper; but he correcteth the abuses about the Supper, commanding every man to examine himself, and so to eat.*] *So he proceeds to other Proofs from the Church at* Jerusalem [*where holy things were administred by Priests that were stark naught, and very many arrant Knaves were present; and yet Christ and his Apostles go into the same Temple for the Publick exercises of Religion: they use the same Worship with the rest of the people; neither the desperate ungodliness of the Pharisees, nor the dissolute licentiousness of the rest of the peoples lives, could drive them from Communion with the rest of the people in holy things: And why? Because the Lord and the Apostles well knew that the Consciences of the Godly are not defiled with the Society of the wicked; if with a pure Conscience they Communicate in the same holy things.*]

Next he proveth the 4th Branch, that he that joyneth to such a Church, doth not therefore Sin, nor is defiled with other mens Impurities, p. 163, 164.

Then p. 164, 165. *he proves the 5th Branch* [*that a Believer that hath joyned himself to such a Church, must not therefore depart, that is separate from such a Church, and that under this danger of guilt*] but it is too long to recite all. It is not men of such Principles and Practices as these that we account Separatists! What do Presbyterians say more than this eminent Independent Brother, in a Writing purposely written in Latin by the perswasion of others in *New England*, to Vindicate their Churches against *Apollonius*, and commended to us by Mr. *T. Goodwin*, Mr. *P. Nye*, and Mr. *S. Simpson*. Yet lest any think him too loose, I will add his last leaf of Rules [*How in a less pure Church Communion must be continued with a safe Conscience?* Answ. 1. *We must still aim and endeavour according to our Places, that the Church may be purified according to Christ's Mind. Not without seasonable and due warning the Church of its Defects. The Defects are to be lamented with holy sighs and sorrows. In no way approving, but prudently and patiently tolerating Defects in that Church, which we can neither cure, nor depart from without a greater Evil.——When singular

gular Evils, cannot be cured without a greater publick Evil; that muſt be born which cannot be amended.

In the Churches Reformation this Doctrine muſt be obſerved (Paræus *in* Matth. 13.) *that thoſe that preſs for too much exactneſs (or ſtrictneſs) do more hurt the Church, than profit it.*

The Spirit of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is a Spirit of Truth, Peace and Communion; ſo loving Peace, that he commandeth Communion with a true Church though impure: and ſo loving Truth, that he forbiddeth impurity in every Church.

We reject the Separatiſts, that diſtinguiſh not between a Church *and the* Impurities *of a Church. Schiſm is a grievous Crime.*

We reject the Formaliſts not ſufficiently diſtinguiſhing a Church from no Church, not ſeparating the pretious from the vile: what is this but Confuſion?

Confuſion *and* Schiſm *are the* Scylla *and* Charybdis: Peace *and* Truth *are the* Jachin *and* Boaz *of the Chriſtian Cauſe: the obtaining of which muſt be endeavoured under him, and implored and expected from him, who is Peace, Way, and Truth, alone able; among ſo many and (alas) too hot Contentions, and differing opinions of the Learned and Godly, to reach us the mete-wand, and direct his Servants into Concord, and into the perfect meaſure of the Temple, Altar and Worſhippers: Preſerving us Men, Brethren, ſearching after truth in Love, both from the left hand of Confuſion, and the right hand of Separation.*] So far Mr. *Norton*, and ſo ends his Book.

And thus I have ſhewed the Nearneſs of both Parties; and eaſineſs of Reconciliation, as to their Principles, and that there is nothing among them, owned by either Party, that ſhould hinder a loving Conſociation, Correſpondency and Communion of the Churches, for their mutual ſtrengthening, and the healing of the Miſchiefs that Diviſions, Emulations, and Contentions have long cauſed among us.

Nothing remains then to be feared, but leſt mens Minds are further diſtant than their Principles, and that Charity doth not effectually diſpoſe them to Agree in Communion as far as their profeſſed Principles will permit them. But, though Experience make this undeniable, yet their Piety and their Profeſſions do put us in hope, that there are ſuch Habitual Principles of Charity, as better Encouragements and Opportunities will undoubtedly revive, to our Reconciliation.

The Congregational men profeſs their deſire of Reconciliation. Read but Mr. *Cotton*'s Preface to Mr. *Norton*; and Mr. *Norton*'s Epiſtle to *Apollonius*: But eſpecially the Practice of ſuch moderate men as Mr. *Firmin*, and divers that of late hence Aſſociated with the Presbyterians, doth give us a more certain Demonſtration of their readineſs for Peace. And if many are otherwiſe minded, it ſhould be no prejudice to the peaceable.

And for the Presbyterians readineſs to the Works of Peace, beſides the many motions that they have made, and the joyning of ſome in Aſſociations with their Brethren, I ſhall now add but the affectionate Profeſſion, which they make of their deſire of Reconcilement both with the Congregational, and Moderate

derate Episcopal Party, in the Epistle to their *Jus Divinum Minist.* 1. Concerning them of the Congregational way, they say [*That this disagreement shall not hinder us from any Christian accord with them in affection. That we can willingly write upon our Study Doors, that Motto which Mr.* Jeremiah Burroughes (*who a little before his Death did ambitiously endeavour after Union, amongst Brethren, as some of us can testifie*) *perswades all Scholars unto.* Opinionum varietas, & opinantium Unitas, non sunt *divisa. And that we shall be willing to entertain any sincere motion* (*as we have also formerly declared in our Printed Vindication*), *that shall further a happy accommodation between us.*

Then speaking of the Godly moderate Episcopal men, they add [*Though herein we differ from them, yet we are far from thinking that this Difference should hinder a happy Union between them and us. Nay, we crave leave to profess to the World, that it will never* (*as we humbly conceive*) *be well with* England *till there be an Union endeavoured, and effected between all those that are Orthodox in Doctrine, though differing among themselves in some Circumstances about Church Government. And the Lord hath strangely made way for this long desired Union, by the bitter, woful and unutterable fruits of our Divisions, which have almost destroyed, not only the Ministry, but even the very heart and life of Religion and Godliness.*] Read there the rest.

You see then that we are *all* resolv'd for Peace and Concord; and devoted to it, and intent upon it: And you see how small a matter will do it: yea, that it is done already, except the actual execution of our Doctrinal Agreements. What then is wanting, but that we be up and doing, and practice as we profess, and that Magistrates, and especially the Protector and Parliament now Assembled, that have so fair an opportunity, and from whom it is commonly expected, do call them to the work, and help to remove the hinderances, and further them by the Countenance and Assistance of their Authority.

The Sum of our Agreement reduced to Practice.

1. WE are Agreed that Adult Church Members, must be such as make [A Credible Profession] of Faith and Repentance, and so of Holy Resolved Obedience: Or such as personally own and accept the Covenant of Grace, and give up themselves to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Let us therefore take up with this Description in our future Agreements; and in the practice, the Prudent, and Charitable will not presume to censure any Mans *Profession* as *Incredible, coram Ecclesiâ* without proof.

Let us therefore unanimously set up *Confirmation*, or (if you dislike the Name) the Tryal and Approbation of the Profession of all that are entered among the Adult Church Members. And if any are too loose on one side, or too rigid on the other in the practical part; the judging, and accepting or refusing of the tryed, let the Matter be debated, at the Synods of the Consociate Pastors, if there be any Accusation put in.

2. We

2. We are Agreed that Conſent is neceſſary to Church-Membership: And that it muſt be a ſignified conſent: And that the moſt expreſs conſent is beſt to the well being of the Church *cæteris paribus*; but yet that a darker way of ſignifying may ſerve to the Being of the Church.

Let us therefore thank God that we live in days of Liberty, wherein we may all uſe the moſt edifying way, and accordingly let us Agree to call our people to an expreſs conſent. But if any deny this, let them not be thereupon diſowned, but forborn, ſo be it they will perform the whole work of their Miniſtry faithfully towards all that they take for their Charge.

3. We are Agreed that it's lawful for a particular Church to conſiſt of no more than can meet in one place: And yet that it is not neceſſary to its Being that actually they do all meet in a place.

Let us therefore reſolve to confine our particular Churches ordinarily to a Pariſh: Unleſs it be where Pariſhes are ſo ſmall, or fit perſons ſo few, that it is fit to lay divers of them together, as to Church ends. Yet ſo that if any refuſe this Agreement, and will needs take four or five Pariſhes for diſtinct worſhipping Churches, and yet but one Governing Church, (in the Officers) we bear with them, and allow them the liberty of their way, ſo be it they will faithfully perform the work both of Worſhip and Diſcipline to them all.

4. We are Agreed that it is lawful and meet that Neighbour Paſtors be adviſers and helpers in the Ordinations of Presbyters; and yet that they are truly Presbyters if they be Ordained but by the Presbyters of a particular Church. (And in caſes of Neceſſity, if unordained.)

Let us therefore Agree in practice that Ordinations be ordinarily performed by the Advice and Aſſiſtance of the Synod of the Aſſociated Paſtors, or ſome deputed Members of it. (The caſe of Ordination by Biſhops I handle elſewhere, and not here.) And if any refuſe this, let them be forborn, ſo be it they be Ordained by Lawful Presbyters, of their own Church or any other with whom we be not bound to avoid Communion.

And if any Congregation through Error have no true Officers (in the judgment of the Synod) for want of true Ordination, yet let us hold ſuch Communion with that Congregation (if other things correſpond) as is due to a Neighbour Community of Chriſtians, though not as is due to a Political Society.

5. We are Agreed that the Paſtors are by Commiſſion from Chriſt appointed to be the Rulers of the Churches, and the people commanded to obey them: And that it is they that are the Authorized Teachers of the Flocks, and are to Adminiſter the Sacraments, and Miniſterially to bind or looſe: And yet that the people are to be Governed as Freemen, and are not to obey apparently unrighteous cenſures, and therefore are by an Obedientiall Judgment, to diſcern what is fit to be obeyed, and what nor.

Let us therefore practiſe according to this Agreement; and let the Paſtors Rule, and let the people Obey; but not Obey againſt Gods Word: And therefore let the people have ſo far cognizance of the Cauſe, and their conſe-

be required, as is neceſſary to their free, diſcerning, ſafe Obedience, and to the Churches Peace. And if any Paſtors will make more uſe of the peoples conſent, and others leſs, let us forbear each other, till ſome ill conſequents produce an accuſation at the Synod; and then let the caſe be heard and judg'd.

6. We are Agreed that a Paſtor of one Church may Exerciſe divers acts of the Paſtoral Office in another if he be called to ſuch Exerciſe *pro tempore*. We need not therefore mention this in our further Forms of Concord; but leave each Man to his Liberty. If any Paſtor think he may not Exerciſe his Paſtoral Office abroad, let him ſtay at home: But let them have Liberty that are otherwiſe minded.

7. We are Agreed that a particular Church that hath a Presbytery, may Exerciſe all Acts of Worſhip and Government within it ſelf, that are appertaining only to it ſelf. And that Synods ſhould be uſed for Communion of Churches, where things that concern the Churches in common, or their Communion with one another, ſhould be heard and judged.

Let us therefore give way to particular Churches to enjoy their Liberty; and let all the Churches be link'd together, and the Paſtors aſſociate, and meet in Synods for ſuch Communion. Yet ſo that if any one in weakneſs ſhall refuſe to Aſſociate, or be an Ordinary Member of ſuch Synods, (being *cæteris ſanis*) we ſhall not therefore withdraw our Brotherly Love, nor that diſtant ſort of Communion of which he is capable: Though we muſt diſown his way, leſt others be tempted to the like Diviſion.

8. We are Agreed that no Men ſhould bury their Talents, and that the Gifts of our people that are ſuited to the profiting of others, ſhould be uſed to as publick benefit as may be, ſo it be orderly, regularly, in their Callings, in a due ſubordination to the Miniſtry, and under their direction, for the helping and not the hindering of their Work (according to the forementioned limitations.)

There is no Difference therefore among us here that is needful to be taken notice of in our Form of Concord, it being between particular perſons, and not parties that the difference lyeth. And actual miſcarriages are to be enquired after as other Crimes in the ſeveral Churches and Aſſociations.

9. We are Agreed that all Pariſhes that have in them a people profeſſing Chriſtianity, and conſent to live as particular Churches in Communion for Gods Worſhip, are *true Churches*, as that word doth ſignifie a *Community of Chriſtians*: And if they have true Paſtors, they are *true Churches*, as the word [Church] doth ſignifie a Political Society of Chriſtians, capable of the ordinary actual worſhipping of God in the publick uſe of all Church Ordinances. But becauſe it is not to be expected that we ſhould all be acquainted with the qualifications, conſent or practice of the people in all the Pariſhes of the Land, nor of the Miniſters call; it is not therefore to be expected that we be made Judges of the ſtate of all Pariſhes, nor that we put our judgment of all, or any of them by Name, into our Form of Concord. But if *practically* any of us ſhall either ſlander any particular Church to be No Church, or ſhall *uſe*

is as no Church, the case must be heard and judged of in our Churches and Associations.

10. We are Agreed that no Member should forsake a Church and be received into another, without sufficient Reason to be given to the Church that he forsaketh; if they require it: And that much less should any part of a Church make an unnecessary Separation from the rest, and become a distinct Church by themselves: And we are Agreed that private Antichurches, (I mean, separated Assemblies set up against the publick Assemblies, and as Rivals drawing persons to themselves and keeping up Faction, and Contention in the place) should be carefully avoided by us all; unless there were a certain Necessity of such Separations. We are Agreed also that no publick Pastors or Churches should refuse the Communion of any of their Neighbours, that are [*Credible Professors of Faith and Repentance, and Holiness of Life*;] much less should they cast off the greatest part of their Parishes that are such! And yet we are Agreed that there are several cases in which Persons may withdraw from Churches; or for those of one Parish to join with a Church in another Parish; though the bounds of our Habitations are usually meet to be observed for the bounding of our Churches (not that all in the Parish be therefore of the Church, but that ordinarily none be of the Church that is not in the Parish.)

Let us therefore put only the necessary Generals into the *Form* of our Agreement, and leave the particular cases of any that shall be accused of any violation thereof, to be heard at the Synods of the Associations: Where if the Accused will appear, they may have a Brotherly hearing; if not, the case may be judged according to the Evidence that shall be given in, and the Associated Brethren proceed accordingly, in admonishing the Offenders, and holding or not holding Communion with them, and declaring this.

The yet Briefer Sum of our Agreement is, 1. To avoid Unnecessary Separations and Contentions. 2. To hold an Ordinary course in Synods, for the Communion of Churches, and strengthning each other for the work of God.

For the attainment of *these* we must yield as far as Lawfully we may in lesser things: But to deny us these, *viz. Union*, and *Communion*, and *Peace*, is to deny us our end, and all.

Yet Note, that it is not our Intention to impose upon all others, all points that these two parties are agreed in, nor to put all their Agreements into our *Form of Concord*, as if we regarded Agreement with no others. For instance, both parties are Agreed of the Divine Institution of meer Ruling Elders: But so are not all others that are fit for their Communion. And therefore let that point be left out, to the liberty of each Church. So both parties are Agreed that the Moderators (or Presidents) of the Associated Synods, should rather (in point of convenience at least) be *temporary*, than *stated*, and that they should have no Negative Voice in Ordination. But others that are fit for our Communion think otherwise: And therefore let this be left out of the *Form of*

Concord.

Concord to our Brethrens Liberty. If they will hold Communion in the Associations that have but temporary Presidents, let them be received: And if those that own not *stated* Presidents, or at least such as Exercise a Negative Voice in Ordination; will yet hold Communion in Synods (with a signification of their dissent in that point) with them that are of a contrary mind, they are to be received; and will be, by such as more regard the honour of God, and the Churches peace, and the Interest of Christian Charity, Piety and common Truths, than their own conceits, and carnal Interests.

I shall therefore next adjoin the Necessary Terms of an Universal Concord between all the Faithful Pastors and Churches of Christ in these Nations, which yet need not be subscribed, but taken as presupposed; there being in the following *Form of Concord*, for the General Peace and Communion of the Churches, enough for Subscription, or Express Consent.

Church Concord

ABOUT

Government and Order.

The Second Part.

The Juſt Terms of Agreement between all Sober, Serious Chriſtians (by what Names ſoever now diſtinguiſhed:) In point, 1. Of Catholick Communion. 2. Of particular Church Communion. 3. Of the Communion of Neighbour Churches; 4. And of Churches of ſeveral Kingdoms. 5. And of their Duty as good Subjects to their Prince.

Humbly offered to all the Chriſtian Churches as the true and ſufficient remedy of their Diviſions, if not rejected or neglected: And as a ſtanding Witneſs before God and Man, againſt *Dividing Zeal* and *Church Tyranny*.

By *RICHARD BAXTER*, a Servant of the God of Love and Peace.

We that are ſtrong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves: Let every one of us pleaſe his Neighbour for his good to edification.— That ye may with One Mind, and One Mouth glorifie God.— Wherefore receive ye one another as Chriſt alſo received us to the Glory of God, Rom. 15. 1, 2, 6, 7.

Be of One Mind, Live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace ſhall be with you, 2 Cor. 13. 11.

LONDON, Printed for *Tho. Parkhurſt* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapſide* near *Mercers* Chapel. 1691.

To the READER.

Countreymen,

MY Saviour *having made me Believe, that every* Kingdom divided against it self is brought to desolation, *Mat.* 12. 25. *I shall the less regard the* Ministers of Satan, *who will say that such attempts to unite the* true Subjects of Christ *and the* King, *is a dangerous Plot to strengthen Rebels against the King, by their Union. If such Fiends should do their will upon me, as* Faith *is but a* means *to the* final perfective *Grace of* Love, *so I shall as much rejoice, to be a* Sacrifice *or* Martyr, *for* Christian Love, *as for the* Christian Faith: *And if* Peacemakers shall be called the Children of God (*by those that are his Children at least,*) *I am contented with that* blessedness. (*Mat.* 5. 9.) *and envy not their kind of Honour or Prosperity.*

If this attempt shall speed no better, than many which I have formerly made have done, as to any publick Reconciliation *I shall not yet think it vain, while the* private minds *of many Christians are formed into more peaceable Apprehensions and Dispositions. But if it should succeed for any publick or common healing, how great would be my Joy? While the Conciliatory Writings and Precious Names of* Usher, Hall, Davenant, Dury, Bergius, Burroughs, &c. *are so sweet to me; Let Envy gnash the Teeth, and dividing Malice do its worst, I hope in this delightful work to live and die.*

One thing I must warn the Reader of, that I have omitted Scripture proofs of my Assertions, because they are self-evident or past Controversie, and because that the proofs which are fetcht from two or three Texts compared, will not be understood by the usual Neighbry Readings of such, as expect the very Syllables: of the Assertions in the proofs. Therefore for brevity I take it to be the better way, at this time to offer here a full sufficient proof of any one of these Assertions, *which shall be questioned, to such as shall soberly demand it.*

A Servant of Christ for his Churches Unity and Peace,

Alton, Nov. 22. 1688.

Richard Baxter.

Q Setting

SEeing you have oft affirmed publickly that the Terms of Concord among Christians are easie to be known, if their unwillingness to practise them were not the hinderance, you are desired to answer these Questions following.

1. "What are the necessary Terms of Catholick Communion of Christians "as Members of the Church Universal?

2. "What are the necessary Terms of the Communion of Christians perso-"nally, in a particular Church?

3. "What are the Terms on which Neighbour Churches may hold Com-"munion with one another?

4. "What are the Terms of Communion between the Churches of several "Kingdoms?

5. "What is the Magistrates Power and Duty about Religion, and the "Churches and Ministers of Christ?

I. It is to be understood that the Universal Church is considered as *Spiritual* or as *Visible*: As *Spiritual*, it is the *Universality* of true *Spiritual* or *Regenerate* Believers, as Headed by Jesus Christ. As *Visible*, it is the Universality of the Baptized, or Professors of true Faith, as Headed by Christ, (the Author and Object of that Faith.) And accordingly *Christians* are to be distinguished. And that the Question is of the *Visible Church and Christians*.

2. This being supposed I answer, that Catholick Visible Communion consisteth, 1. *Fundamentally*, in being all *Baptized* or entered into the *same Covenant of Grace*, with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and so being joyned to the same Head, and entered into the same Universal Body, and professing the same Faith, and Love, and Obedience contained in that Covenant, and not falling away from that Profession, or any Essential part thereof.

2. And consequently that we all acknowledge the extraordinary Ministry of the Prophets and Apostles, and receive their Testimony and Doctrine recorded in the Sacred Scriptures: At least the foresaid Essentials of the Covenant; and so much more as we understand, and are convinced to be Canonical Scriptures, or written by the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

3. And also that we acknowledge a stated ordinary Ministry in the Church, appointed by Christ to Disciple and Baptize the Nations of the World, and then to teach them to observe all his Commands. And that we profess our willingness to *join in Christian Assemblies* under the conduct of such Ministers, for the worshipping of God, and furthering our own and others Salvation; if we have opportunity so to do: And that we do accordingly.

II. Q. 1. We speak only of Visible Christians in this second Question also (of *Church Communion*.)

2. [*A Particular Church*] signifieth either, 1. *A Community* of Christians agreed

agreed to live under Pastoral Guidance, before they have a Pastor, or have practised that agreement. This is not the Church here meant. 2. Or a *Political Society of Christian Pastor and People professedly associated for Personal Communion, Exercise of these Relations as such in the publick worshipping of God, and for the furtherance of Love and Obedience in each other.*

The *Ends* difference it from all *Civil Societies* of Christians; and from the *Associations of many Churches* for Communion by *delegates*.

The necessary Terms of this Church Communion are these.

1. The *Pastor* (whether *one* or *more*) must have all things *essential* to his Office. 1. As to his Qualifications, that is, 1. That he understand at least the Essential Points of Christianity and Church Communion. 2. That he be able to teach them to others in some competent degree. 3. That he be *willing* to do it; and this for Gods Honour, the Churches Good, and Mens Salvation. 2. As to his *Call*, that he have a true notification of the will of God, that he should undertake this Office; which is ordinarily done. 1. By the Ordination, (that is, the Approbation and Investiture) of Bishops or Pastors. 2. And (in this case of his relation to a particular Church) by the *peoples consent*: All this in truth is needful before God, and in Appearance and Profession before the Church.

2. The *People* must be Baptized persons, Sacramentally engaged into Covenant with God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and such as have not professedly deserted that Covenant by Apostasie; nor are proved before a lawful Judicature to be deserters of any Essential part thereof. (Whether open professed Covenanting may not serve without Baptism in cases of Necessity, where Baptism cannot be had, is a case so extraordinary that we need not here meddle with it.)

3. He that was Baptized in Infancy, and yet having opportunity at full age doth make no Profession of Christianity, nor own his Baptismal Covenant openly by word or deed, is to be numbered with Deserters.

4. Though the most plain and open profession is usually best, where it may be had; yet a profession less explicite may serve to the *being* of Church-members; such as is their actual joyning with those Churches, who purposely assemble to make publick profession of the Christian Religion (Faith, Love and Obedience.)

5. There must be also a signification of consent to their particular Church-Relation: either more express and plain, or at least by such actions which may be reasonably presumed to signifie it. (As ordinary joining in Church-worship with that particular Church, and submitting to the necessary guidance of the Pastors.)

6. He that thus consenteth to his Relation to the *Pastor* and that *Church*, is a Member, though he consent not to the Membership or Presence of *many particular Members thereof*: Because *they* are but *Integral* and not *Essential* parts of the Church.

7. But if a usual mixture (in the Assemblies) of Hereticks or Strangers which are not Members of that Church, or any other confounding cause do give the Pastors *sufficient reason* to call *all* or *part* of the people to an *express signification*

of

of their *consent* to their Relation, to put it out of doubt; they that causelesly refuse such signification, do seem to deny their consent, and allow the Pastor and Church to judge of them accordingly.

8. The office of the Bishops or Pastors is subordinate to the *Teaching*, and *Interceeding* and *Ruling* office of Christ; And their work is to Teach the people the Word of God; to be their Mouth and Guide in publick *Worship*, in Prayer, and in Thanksgiving and Praise to God; and to administer his holy Sacraments, and to exercise that Power of the Keys which Christ hath committed to their trust, in the Prudent and cautelous use of Church-Discipline: And all this according to the Laws of Christ, recorded in the holy Scriptures. These therefore must be the Works and Ends, for which these Churches must (professedly) assemble: Especially on the Lord's Days, which are separated to these holy Uses.

9. The General Command (in Nature and Scripture) *that all be done to Edification, decently and in order*, do require the Church with Prudence to determine of such undetermined Circumstances, Modes and Orders, as fall under those Generals: As what Translation of the Scriptures to use; what Metre of the Psalms; what Tunes; whether to divide the Scriptures into Chapters and Verses; what Chapters to read; what Psalms to Sing; and when and how many: what particular Method to use in Preaching; and what words: what helps for Memory? whether written Notes? in length or briefly? At what Hour to begin: How long to Preach and Pray? In what words to Pray. In what decent habit, and in what gesture to Preach or Sing God's Praises, *&c.* what Utensils to use, as Pulpit, Font, Table, Cloth, Cups, *&c.* In what Place, *&c.* In *all* which the Pastors are the *Guides* by Office, and in *many* the *Agents*: And it is no sinful Will-worship or adding to the Word of God, to determine in such cases: And they that will not stand to such Determinations cannot be Members of their Flocks: As if any will not meet at that time, or place where the Church doth meet, or will not use the same Psalms, or Translations, or hear the Pastor in such a Method, or with such Notes, *&c.* he thereby refuseth the Communion of that Church, which must have *some* determinate time and place, *&c.* But yet the Pastors Power being for Edification, and not for Destruction, he must take the Peoples consent in all, so far as the Churches good requireth it, to their Edification and Peace, and guide them as a Father by Love, and in Humility as the Servant of all; and not as Lording it over the Flock: And if his Determination should be so perverse as to be destructive of the Church or of the Worship of God, the people must seek the due Remedy (of which more anon).

10. As the Keys of the Church are committed by Christ to the *Pastors*, for *intromission*, *Guidance* and *Sentential Excommunication*, that is, for the *Government of the Church*; so the *People* must not usurp any part of their office: They are not obliged to try the Faith or Holiness of such as are to be Baptized, or such as are to be received into their Publick Communion; but may rest in the Pastors Judgment, whose office it is to try them: supposing still that

that they have their due remedy, in caſe of corrupting or deſtructive Male-adminiſtration. And that their needful aſſiſtance in their Places ſhould be uſed.

11. If any Member of the Church do live in any Hereſie or other great Sin, contrary to his Covenant with God, thoſe who are acquainted with it, muſt admoniſh him and ſeek to bring him to Repentance, in the order appointed by Chriſt; And if he repent not, they muſt tell the Church; And if being duely admoniſhed by the Paſtors, he yet repent not, the Paſtors as the Church Guides, muſt pronounce him unfit for the Communion of the Church, and require him to forbear it, and the people to avoid him; which the people muſt obey. Yet ſo, as that if the people have ſufficient cauſe to doubt whether a cenſure be not contrary to the Word of God, they may enquire into the cauſe; And if they find it contrary indeed, they muſt not execute that Sentence, by any of thoſe private Acts of alienation, which are in their own Power: And they may ſeek due reparation of the publick breach.

12. If one *Paſtor* of a Church where there are *many* do perniciouſly and notably corrupt the *Faith* or the *Worſhip*, or the *Diſcipline* of the Church, the other Paſtors muſt admoniſh him, and both they and the people diſown him, if after a firſt and ſecond Admonition, he repent not. And the ſame muſt the people do by *all* the Paſtors, if all be guilty in the ſame kind; and muſt truſt their Souls with more faithful Paſtors. But this muſt not be done miſtakingly, headily or raſhly, nor as an Act of *Government* over the Paſtors or the Church; but as an Act of Obedience to God, for the preſervation of their Souls, and of the intereſt of Chriſt: Nor muſt it be done without ſuch conſultation with, and aſſiſtance of the Neighbour Churches, or the Magiſtrates, as their caſe ſhall make neceſſary or profitable to their right Ends. Nor by a violation of any lawful Orders of the Magiſtrates.

13. If a Paſtor preach ſome unſound Doctrines, or faultily perform the publick Worſhip, or neglect juſt Diſcipline, and receive the unworthy to the Communion of the Church, or reject the worthy, the preſence of the innocent Members, (who make not the fault their own by conſent, or by neglecting their Duties to reform it) maketh none of this to be their Sin, nor is to be taken for a ſign of their conſent: Nor will the preſence of the unworthy deprive the Godly of the Bleſſing or Comfort of God's Ordinance: Nor are they bound to ſeparate from that Church, becauſe of theſe Corruptions, unleſs they are ſo great as to unchurch that Church, or make their Worſhip and Communion ſuch, as God himſelf rejecteth and will not accept: or unleſs by impoſing Sin upon them, or ſome other way, the Church expel *them*; or they have accidentally ſome other reaſon to remove.

14. The Members of the ſame Church muſt live ſo near to one another, as that they may be capable of the Communion and Duties of their relation. But whether Pariſh-bounds ſhall be Church-bounds, and whether there ſhall be one Church only, or more in the ſame Pariſh, is a thing which God hath not directly determined, but only by general Rules to direct our Prudence, as caſes are by Circumſtances varied.

Where the Magiſtrates Laws thus bound the Churches, and the conveniences of *Numbers*, *Maintenance*, *Place*, and *common Expectation* require it; And where it is commonly taken for ſcandalous Diſobedience, or Diſorder or Schiſm, to do otherwiſe, Prudence forbiddeth us to violate theſe Bounds and Orders, without true neceſſity. Not taking *all* for Church-Members who are *Pariſhioners*, but taking *none but Pariſhioners* into that Church, nor ſetting up other Churches in that Pariſh. But when there are no ſuch Laws and Reaſons for it, and where there are plainly greater Reaſons or neceſſity to do otherwiſe; we ſhould not make ſuch a Law to our ſelves.

15. When true ſound Churches are firſt ſettled, *all unneceſſary and cauſeleſs Separation* from them, or ſetting up of new Churches in the ſame Towns or Pariſhes, by way *of diſclaiming them*, or in *oppoſition to them*, ſhould be avoided by all Chriſtians. Becauſe, 1. We find not in Scripture times, that any one City had many ſuch Churches, approved of God: (The numbers of Chriſtians being but enow for one). 2. Becauſe it taketh up more Miniſters than the intereſt of the Univerſal Church can allow to ſo few. 3. Becauſe it proceedeth from a ſinful want of Love and Unity; and tendeth to the further decreaſe of both: Long and ſad Experience having ſhewed, that each of thoſe Churches think it to be their Duty to ſtabliſh their ſeveral perſwaſions, and oppoſe the contrary; whereby they are carried as for the intereſt of the truth, to make their Adverſaries be thought to be ignorant, erroneous, or bad, and ſo to make one another ſeem leſs amiable; to the ruine of Love and the diviſion and danger of the Churches. And becauſe *Love* and *Unity* are ſo frequently and vehemently preſſed in the Scriptures: and Diviſions or Schiſm ſo much forbidden.

16. All theſe are ſinful Schiſmatical Separations, but in very different degrees. 1. When the intereſt of ſome *Hereſie*, or leſſer Errour, and the diſclaiming of ſome truth, doth cauſe men to ſeparate. 2. When they *ſlander* a *true Miniſtry* as *no true Miniſtry*, and ſo ſeparate. 3. When they ſlander a *true Church* as *no true Church*. 4. When they ſeparate becauſe they accuſe true worſhip to be *Idolatry*, or lawful worſhip to be *unlawful*. 5. When they falſly accuſe the Churches Faith, Worſhip or Order to be defective, and to want ſome neceſſary part (As the Papiſts do by the Proteſtants, who take up with the Scripture-Religion alone.) 6. When they accuſe ſome tolerable failing in the Church, to be intolerable, and ſuch as maketh their Communion unlawful. 7. When they ſeparate from the Church becauſe of the Holineſs and Strictneſs of its Doctrine and juſt Diſcipline, which croſſeth them in their Sin; or becauſe they hate the Purity of its Worſhip and Obedience. 8. When they ſeparate becauſe that they have not a part in the Government of the Church themſelves, in receiving Members, or cenſuring them; or becauſe they may not be Teachers of the Church, or otherwiſe invade the Paſtoral Office. 9. When Pride or Coveteouſneſs maketh them ſeparate, through perſonal diſtaſte at the Paſtors or any Members, for want of reſpect or honour, or gain, or upon ſuppoſed injuries. 10. When the Minor part ſeparate, becauſe they have not their own will againſt the Major part, in the choice of Miniſters, or in other Church-Affairs,

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in which they have juſt cauſe to acquieſce. 11. When they over-value their own Conceits and doubtful Opinions, and their own indifferent Modes or words of Circumſtances of Worſhip or Order, ſo that they think it needful to ſeparate to enjoy them. 12. When they expect that the Paſtors ſhould Excommunicate, or deny the Communion of the Church, to ſuch as they account unfit, without any accuſation and proof, or true Church-juſtice; And do ſeparate from the Communion where ſuch are received; as unlawful for themſelves. 13. When they ſeparate upon this falſe Suppoſition, that their preſence maketh them guilty as Conſenters, of all the Miniſters Errours in the Doctrine or Method or words of his Preaching, Praying or other Adminiſtrations. 14. When they ſeparate becauſe the Church will not forbear the Singing of *David*'s Pſalms, the Baptizing of Infants, or ſome other ſuch part or order of God's Worſhip. 15. When they ſeparate becauſe they will not conſent to the lawful Circumſtances of Time, Place, Tranſlation, Metre, Tunes, Utenſils, or Methods which the Church doth uſe. Theſe all are unlawful Separations. But the *great* aggravations are, when they ſeparate to ſet up Heretical Doctrine, and Teachers, or falſe Church-Orders and Worſhip corrupted in the Eſſentials; or to promote ungodlineſs, or to rail at others from whom they ſeparate, and to cheriſh Diviſions to the injury of the common Chriſtian Cauſe.

17. Theſe following are lawful Cauſes of Separation. 1. When the Paſtors are really no Miniſters of Chriſt, but uncapable, or *uncalled Uſurpers*, or Hereticks or Infidels; or open Enemies to Piety, who do more harm than good, and ſet themſelves to deſtroy the Church of God, and the ends of their Miniſtry. 2. When the Church maketh not Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, or are not baptized or viſible Chriſtians. 3. When the worſhip of the Church is Idolatry, or ſuch for the Subſtance as God will not accept, nor it is not lawful to joyn in. 4. When the Church renounceth, or omitteth *any Ordinance* of God, which the whole Church muſt ordinarily perform, and which *all things conſidered*, it is not lawful to omit. 5. When (after due admonition) the Church is turned into a Theatre of Contention, and a School of Malignity and reviling the Brethren, and of deſtroying Chriſtian Love to others; or of promoting Schiſm to the intolerable wrong of the people, and of others, and of the Cauſe and Churches of Chriſt. 6. When (after due Admonition and Patience) the Church ſo far renounceth Diſcipline, as openly to own and juſtifie ſuch wickedneſs or heinous Sins, as are inconſiſtent with the true Profeſſion of Chriſtianity and Godlineſs.

18. And if the unſoundneſs, badneſs or weakneſs of the Paſtors, and the faultineſs of the Worſhip, Order or Diſcipline, be not ſo great as to make Communion with the Church *ſimply unlawful*; yet any *free man* whoſe Edification is greatly hindered by it, and can elſewhere have far greater helps for his Salvation, and joyn with a Church which walketh more conformably to the Chriſtian Rule, may lawfully remove himſelf to ſuch a Miniſtry and Church; when it is not to the greater hurt of others, than his own good. Eſpecially ſuch whoſe ignorance, weakneſs and deadneſs, maketh a lively and convincing Miniſtry more needful to their ſafety and welfare, than it is to others: For it is a Sin, *Cæteris paribus*,

to prefer the worse before the better; and a sin to neglect the best means for our Souls which we can lawfully enjoy: And the Soul is more precious than to be hazarded or left in sin and darkness for an unnecessary Circumstance.

Nor is it any sinful Separation, or Disorder, for the Members of one Church to communicate occasionally with other Churches of Christ; seeing our relation to the Universal Church is more strict and inviolable than to any particular Church as such.

Also in case of removal of our Habitations, or change of our Family Relations, or other the like Reasons, it is lawful to remove from one Church to another (without any unjust censuring of that which we remove from:) And if the first Church will not consent (after due means for their satisfaction) we may remove without their consent.

19. He that is denied Communion with the Church, unless he will speak or subscribe some falshood, or take any false Oath, or make any unlawful promise, or commit any other sin, is sinfully cast out or repulsed by the Imposer, and is not guilty of Schism or sinful Separation, by denying to commit such Imposed sin.

And he that only removeth from the *place of meeting*, with the Pastor and Church when *they remove*, and doth not withdraw from the *Church it self*; or that adhereth to his *lawful Pastor* and *part* of the *Church*, when the rest of the Church adhere to an *Usurper*, is not to be judged guilty of Schism; for such avoiding of Schism.

20. The principal care for the avoiding of Schism, and for maintaining Unity and Love, is incumbent on the Pastors of the Church; whose first work must be to preserve this Love and Unity in their particular Churches, to prevent withdrawing into separating Churches. To which end, their first care must be to give no just cause, by corrupting of Doctrine, Worship or Discipline, to any to withdraw; and not to impose any *unnecessary thing* as necessary to Communion; but to *unite in things necessary*, and to give *liberty in things unnecessary*. (A means approved in all Ages by Peacemakers:) And to guide the Church by the paternal Government of *Reason and Love*, and not by Tyranny to make themselves hateful: And to be much in preaching *Love and Concord*, that the people may know the sin and danger of Factions and Divisions; and to avoid all Factiousness and Contentiousness themselves. And their next care must be to labour after a *laudable* (if they cannot reach an *eminent*) degree, of *ability* in teaching, and exemplariness in a *holy* and *charitable Life*, that they may win the esteem and love of the Flock, and may give them no occasion to think that the necessity of their Souls, requireth them to seek for better helps.

But if *differing* (though tolerable) Opinions, do so possess any of the peoples minds, that no means can satisfie them, to continue in the same Assemblies; and their presence will be more hurtful than their absence; or if the Pastor or Church be so over-rigid as not to tolerate their dissent; the next thing to be done, is to permit them to Worship in other Assemblies, (though their withdrawing may not be justifiable;) and to take care that Love and Peace be maintained with them, as with Neighbour Churches; though perhaps weak and faulty; which bringeth us up to the next Question.

Q. 3.

Q. 3. *What are the Terms on which Neighbour Churches, may hold Communion with one another?*

A. What theſe *particular Churches* in the queſtion are is ſhewed before.

The *Communion* in queſtion conſiſteth, 1. In holding the *ſame Faith*. 2. In the *ſame Worſhip* of God, in the *neceſſary* parts. 3. In the *ſame profeſſion of Obedience* to God. 4. In a *profeſſed eſtimation* of each other as *Brethren*, and as *true Churches* of Chriſt. 5. And in a *profeſſed Love* to one another as ſuch. 6. And in ſuch *Communion* and *mutual Aſſiſtance*, as tend to the preſervation of the *Church Univerſal*, and the *benefit of each other*. The Terms therefore and means muſt be theſe following.

1. They muſt publickly profeſs the *ſame Chriſtian Religion*, in all the *Eſſential* parts; which is no more, but [*That we continue our conſent to our Baptiſmal Covenant, with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, renouncing the Devil, the World and the Fleſh: Particularly profeſſing to believe all the Articles of the Ancient Creed, and to Deſire all that is contained in the Lords Prayer, and ſincerely to endeavour to live towards God and Men according to the Ten Commandments: Believing alſo the Sacred Canonical Scriptures to be true, and taking them for the intire Rule of our Divine Belief, and Worſhip, and Obedience.*] *And we renounce, ſo far as we can know them, all Hereſies, Errors and Practices contrary hereto.*]

This is all the *Profeſſion* that is to be required of any perſon in order to the *Catholick Communion* of *Chriſtians* as ſuch; or of the *Members of a particular Church*, (beſides their conſent to their particular Church relation;) or of *Neighbour Churches* for their Communion with each other. Except when any *ſcandal* obligeth us to clear our ſelves (whether it be ſuſpected *Hereſie* or *wickedneſs* of *Life*) by a juſt *Purgation* or *Repentance*. And the requiring of *larger unneceſſary Profeſſions*, hath been the grand Engine of Church Diviſions through many Generations.

2. Yet as there are *Chriſtians* of *divers degrees* of knowledge, and ſoundneſs in the ſame Church, ſo there are *Churches* alſo as different: And though we muſt own them all as *Chriſtian Churches*, which are ſuch indeed, yet muſt we not judge them *equally ſound* or *pure*; but muſt *diſown* the groſs *corruptions* of Doctrine, Worſhip or Diſcipline which are proved to be in any of them; and muſt *ſpecially* honour thoſe that are more faithful, pure and entire.

3. *No one particular ſingle Church* muſt claim or uſurp a Right of *Dominion* or *Government* over other Churches, as *given them by God*; ſeeing that all ſuch true Churches are as Cities or Corporations in one Kingdom; which are all governed by one King, but are none of them rightful Rulers of the reſt. Nor muſt any Men of their own heads ſet up ſuch Forms of Government as of *Humane right*, in Conformity to the Secular Governments of the World, (and this as *Spiritual* in the Exerciſe of the Keys which Chriſt committed to his Miniſters) tho' one eminent Miniſter may inſtruct and admoniſh many others, and have ſome care of many Churches) contrary to, or inconſiſtent with, the Orders ſetled by Chriſt or his Apoſtles, who were commiſſioned by him for the

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ſetling of all Univerſally neceſſarily Church Government, and infallibly guided therein by the Holy Ghoſt, Much leſs may the Unity and Peace of the Church be laid upon ſuch invented policies, as it is by the Papiſts, who make their forged Head, Pope or Council, a conſtitutive eſſential part of the Catholick Church, and feign all the Chriſtian World to be Schiſmaticks, who will not be his Subjects.

4. But *Love*, and *Concord*, and *Peace* muſt be maintained among the *equal parts* of the Catholick Church. Seeing it is the ſtrength of the Churches and their Beauty, and the Exerciſe and help of the Life and Holineſs of all the parts: Therefore ſuch correſpondencies muſt be maintained among them, as tend to a right underſtanding of each other, and to a juſt furtherance of theſe happy ends: And as in particular *Churches*, the determinations of *uſeful circumſtances* according to *Gods general Rules*, is no *ſinful addition* to Gods Word or Ordinances, ſo neither is it here to be ſo judged, if Magiſtrates by *Laws* or Churches by *conſent*, do determine of *uſeful undetermined circumſtances*, for the *ordering* of theſe *correſpondencies*, and preventing Contentions, Factions and Diviſions.

5. The ordinary means of theſe correſpondencies, are *Meſſengers* and *Synods*, (or *Councils*) and *Letters Teſtimonial* or *Certificates*. If one Church be offended with another, upon ſuſpicion of Hereſie or ſcandalous Practices, they may by *Meſſengers* admoniſh them, and *theſe* may by *Meſſengers* make their *Purgation* or *Confeſſion*. As alſo if they deſire *Advice* or *Help* from one another; but if in *common* and *weighty* caſes, there be need of more *common* and *judicious* conſultations, or ſignifications of *Conſent* and Concord, *Synods* are the means thereto. And if one Member Travel into other parts, or remove his dwelling, or be to be received by other Churches; eſpecially in Suſpicious Times and Caſes, *Communicatory Letters* and *Certificates* are the means, that Hereticks and Deceivers abuſe not the Churches.

6. Whether theſe *Synods* ſhall be held at certain *ſtated times*, or *variouſly* as occaſions vary? And whether they ſhall have a Preſident? And whether he ſhall be *mutable* or *fixed*? And of *how many Churches* they ſhall be compoſed? And *how oft* they ſhall meet, and *how long* they ſhall ſit; with ſuch like, are circumſtances left to Humane Prudence, under the general Laws of Chriſt. But the uſe of Synods is ſo *ordinary* and *great*, that in *ſound and peaceable* Countreys, where *Hereſie* or *Church-Tyranny* doth not turn them againſt their proper ends; and where *State-Jealouſies* cauſe not *Rulers* to forbid them, the *ſtatedneſs* and *frequency* of them will be of very great advantage to the Churches: But in the contrary caſes it may be quite contrary.

7. Though no one of *theſe Biſhops* or Paſtors in Councils (nor *many conjunct*) be by *Divine Right* the *proper Governour* over the reſt, and therefore as *to one another* their *Canons*, are *Agreements* for *Union*, rather than the *Laws* of *Superior Governours*, yet do they not by their *Aſſembling loſe* their Governing Power over their *ſeveral Flocks*, but meet to exerciſe it with the *greater conſideration and force*: And therefore their lawful Determinations and Agreements may be truely obligatory to their ſeveral *Flocks*.

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8. The largeneſs of theſe Councils ſhould be ſuited to the occaſion and neceſſity: As the Scandals, Hereſies, Schiſms or Contentions do require. But to make *proper Univerſal Councils* to be the ordinary *Supreme Governing Lawgivers* to a *Body Politick* called the Univerſal Church is a device of thoſe who would do Chriſts work in their own miſtaking way, and for the preſerving of the Churches Unity, will deſperately divide, corrupt and injure it. There is *no neceſſity* of it, *Chriſts Univerſal Laws* being ſufficient, with the *Civil Government* of Princes, and the *Circumſtantial Determinations* of the particular Churches: And it is *pernicious*, if not *impoſſible*: The many thouſand Miles diſtance of the Churches, the paucity of the Paſtors, and neceſſity of their preſence in many Churches; the many years that muſt be ſpent in Travel; the oppoſition of Heathen and Infidel Princes whoſe Subjects they are, or through whoſe Countreys they muſt Travel; the Wars and Jealouſies of Princes; the probability of the death of the ableſt Paſtors in ſuch a Voyage; they being uſually aged Men and weak; their diverſity of Tongues, and unintelligibleneſs to one another; their long continuance in ſuch Councils; their incapacity to meet and hear together in any one Room; the probability that the numerouſneſs of the *neareſt Biſhops*, and paucity of the *remote*, will make a Faction go for the Council; the improbability that ever they will return to bring home the Decrees; the unſatisfiedneſs of the Churches in their Decrees, when a thouſand, or an hundred Paſtors who chuſe one ſingle Delegate, know not whether he will ſpeak their ſenſe or not; with many ſuch Reaſons, make it as *pernicious* as *unneceſſary*. Nor have the Chriſtian Churches *ever had* ſuch Councils (the meetings of the Twelve Apoſtles being nothing to this purpoſe:) But as all Men know that the Roman Emperors had no power to Summon the Paſtors who were the Subjects of *other Princes*; ſo the recorded *Suffrages* of all the Councils certifie us, that *they were none ſuch*; but the Subjects *only of the Roman Empire*, (or thoſe *that had been* ſuch) with a very inconſiderable number of ſome adjacent Biſhops, and that but very ſeldom: So that thoſe Councils were *Univerſal* only as to the *Empire* of *Rome* (and that but very rarely, if ever) but never as to the Chriſtian World.

9. If a plurality of Hereticks, Schiſmaticks, or ungodly Biſhops or Paſtors, ſhould by the advantage of their Councils oppreſs the Churches or the Truth, the Sound and Faithful Paſtors muſt hold on in the way of Duty, and not forſake the Truth or the Flocks, in Obedience to ſuch Councils.

10. If any Church or Paſtor be accuſed or defamed to the Neighbour Churches, of any Hereſie, Schiſm, Scandal, or Injury, either to any Perſon of that Church, or to any Neighbour Church or Perſon, the general Precepts of Chriſtian Charity, Concord, Humility, Submiſſion, *&c.* do oblige ſuch accuſed Perſons, to tender to their offended Brethren (eſpecially if it be *many Churches*) due ſatisfaction, and to hear their Reaſons and Admonitions, and to acknowledge their own faults, and amend if they have erred; and in *lawful* things to yield to others, for Peace and Concord, and to avoid offence, where greater accidents make it not then *unlawful* ſo to do.

11. If

11. If any Paſtors or Neighbour Churches, remain impenitent, under ſuch proved *Hereſie*, *Impiety* or *Crimes*, as are inconſiſtent with the true profeſſion of Godlineſs, the Synods, or Neighbour Churches (after due *Admonition* and *Patience*) ſhould openly diſown their ſins, and if they be inconſiſtent with the Eſſentials of Chriſtian Communion, ſhould alſo diſclaim Communion with them; and ſhould ſend to the innocent part to exhort them to ſave themſelves by Separation from the reſt; or to forſake ſuch Heretical and Impenitent Paſtors: And ſhould motion them to better Paſtors, and ſend ſome to inſtruct them in the mean time, if they be accepted. But none of this muſt be done, in caſe of tolerable infirmities or failings.

12. A truely Ordained Miniſter of Chriſt, being called or accepted by a Church for the preſent time, to teach them, and guide them in publick Worſhip and Sacramental Communion, in the Sickneſs, or Abſence of their ſtated Paſtors, or in a vacancy, ought to aſſiſt them, and is to be eſteemed as a Miniſter of Chriſt in thoſe Adminiſtrations.

And when a Church is deſtitute of Paſtors, it is (ordinarily) the peoples Duty, to *deſire* the Faithful Neighbour Paſtors, to aſſiſt them for ſupply; eſpecially in the tryal of ſuch parts of Paſtoral ſufficiency, which they are *unable* to try themſelves; and to *Ordain* (by *Approbation* and Solemn *Inveſtiture*) ſuch a Perſon to the Miniſtry as they *Conſent to*, if he be not before Ordained; or if he be; yet by Prayer to deſire God, to Bleſs him in that ſpecial Charge.

Q. 4. *What are the terms of Communion between the Churches of ſeveral Kingdoms?*

A. This needs no more addition to the former Anſwer but this. 1. That their Communion in the main muſt be the ſame in *Faith* and *Love* and *Obedience to God*, as if they were under the ſame Civil Government. 2. But they muſt not buſie themſelves needleſly with the diſtant and unknown caſes and buſineſs of others; Nor 3. Muſt they violate the lawful reſtraints of their civil Governours, nor diſturb the Peace of Kingdoms, upon pretences of the Churches Privileges or Intereſt: 4. And if they are offended at the Doctrine, Worſhip or Practice of other Churches; they ſhould ſend to them for ſatisfaction, and thoſe Churches ſhould ſend them the forementioned Confeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, and either purge themſelves from the Crimes of which they are accuſed, or confeſs them and forſake them.

But when the Paſtors which in ſeveral Countries, have drunk in differing Opinions, ſhall expect that all others ſhould ſpeak as they do, in all controverted Points of tolerable difference; and by their odious imagined conſequences, ſhall ſlander other Churches or Paſtors, as holding that which they diſclaim, or as denying that which in their publick Confeſſions they profeſs as their very Religion, and by their paſſions, unskilfulneſs and uncharitableneſs, ſhall make all differences (though but in *words*, or *very narrow*) ſeem more *material*, *wide* and *dangerous* than they are, and ſhall hereupon proclaim their Brethren to be here-

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tical or blasphemous, and use to revile them, and renounce Communion with them, and would silence the Pastors if it were in their Power; These under the Name of the Ministers of Christ, do powerfully militate for the Devil against the Love and Peace of Christians; and are the pernicious Incendiaries in the Churches of Christ.

Q. 5. *What is the Magistrates Power and Duty about Religion, and the Churches and Ministers of Christ?*

Answ. I shall say more as to their *Power*, than as to their *Duty*, because I know not how it will be *endured*; or how that counsel will be *taken* or *followed*, which is *not desired*. It more concerneth us to consider of our *own duty to them*.

1. All the *forcing Power* about matters Ecclesiastical, (whether by *corporal Penalties* or *forced Mulcts*) belongeth *only* to the *Magistrate*: (Besides what Parents and Masters may do). And if any *Pastors* use it, it must be *as Magistrates*, receiving it from the *Soveraign*. And the *Sword* is so *unseemly* in a *Pastors* hand, and so *ill taken* by the people, and so adverse to the *persuasive Loving Government* which he must exercise, and hath ever been of such *unhappy effects* to the World; that it were to be wished that Princes would keep their Sword from the Clergy to themselves, and commit it to such Officers, as have not so much other work to do, and are not so likely to abuse it.

2. If any *Pastors* will *declare* that Princes are *bound* to *punish* men, *meerly as Excommunicated* by *them*, without any *tryal* of the Cause before *themselves* or Officers; and will *Excommunicate Magistrates* for not Imprisoning, Banishing or Burning, or otherwise afflicting those whom the Clergy have Excommunicated, or judged to be so used; Much more if any will teach and declare that *Excommunicate Kings* are *no Kings*, (yea, though a *Foreigner* that hath *no Power* over them Excommunicate them); or that they may be *kill'd* as *Tyrants*; or that the *Pope* or any other, have Power to *depose them*, and dispose of their Dominions (see the Council at *Lateran* under *Innocent* 3d. Can. 3. and the Council at *Rome* under *Gregor.* 7.) If such be *Subjects*, they are injurious to the Civil Power; If they are *Foreigners*, they are *open declared Enemies*.

3. The Office and Power of Kings and other Magistrates is from God; and their lawful Commands are to be obeyed for Conscience sake; and not to avoid their Punishments only.

4. Their Office is to promote Obedience to God and to his Laws, by making Subordinate Laws of their own, and to be a terrour to Evil-doers, and a Praise and Encouragement to them that do well.

5. The Clergy as well as others must be subject to Kings and Magistrates: Nor is it tolerable Doctrine which would exempt their *Persons* or *Estates*, except it be by the King's consent.

6. Princes must not only promote natural Obedience to the *true God*, but also the special Faith and Obedience of the *Gospel*, by means which are suitable thereunto.

7. Princes may make Laws, forbidding the *Publication* of all *pernicious Dam-*

ning Doctrines, and the *Practice* of *Idolatry*, and of all *great and notable Crimes* againſt the Law of God, and may Correct the Offenders by convenient Penalties, with Prudence and Moderation.

8. If *heretical, covetous*, or *lazy* Paſtors, corrupt God's *Word and Worſhip* notoriouſly, or neglect their *certain Duty*, to the betraying or endangering of the Flocks, or are perſons *uncapable of the Office*; the Magiſtrate may drive them on to their Duties, and (moderately and prudently) puniſh them for their negligence and unfaithfulneſs; and may forbid the *uncapable* to *exerciſe* that Office.

9. Such *Circumſtances* of *Worſhip*, and *Orders* of *Aſſemblies* (before inſtanced) as are fit for *Common Determination* and *Agreement in all the Churches*; being ſuch whoſe Determination is *not proper* to *the Paſtors Office*, may (on moderate terms, and by religious advice) be determined of by Magiſtrates; And all their lawful Determinations muſt be obeyed.

10. There needeth not the device of Popes or Patriarchs, to call Councils, or to keep Peace among the Paſtors of the Church: For the *Magiſtrate muſt* do it, as a great part of the work of his Office. *Every Soveraign* may call *ſuch Paſtors* unto Councils as are *his Subjects*: And *ſeveral Princes* by agreement may call their *reſpective Subjects* together when there is Cauſe; And *proper Univerſal Councils* (as is ſhewed) are things which never were known, nor are not to be expected: And it muſt be a *very extraordinary neceſſity*, which muſt warrant the Paſtors of *ſeveral Kingdoms*, to hold *Councils* together, when they are *forbidden* by their Kings: Princes alſo may correct Church-Tyrants and Uſurpers, and Deſtroyers of Faith, or Piety or Peace: They ought to reſtrain ſuch Paſtors as would raiſe Seditions or Rebellions, or Perſecutions of the Innocent, or that pretend Religion for the open and obſtinate revilings of their Brethren, and are proved to be unquiet Firebrands to kindle Diſſentions, and deſtroy Mens Love to one another, or *arbitrarily* to oppreſs the Flocks.

11. When any queſtion, *Who muſt be Judge*, in caſes of *Hereſie, Infidelity*, or *Idolatry* as divulged or practiſed, the true anſwer is obvious and eaſie. 1. In regard of *publick Eccleſiaſtical judgment, and the Sentence of Excommunication or Abſolution*, the *Paſtors* of the Church are the proper Judges, by virtue of the power of the Keys. 2. In regard of *publick civil judgment in order to corporal forcible puniſhment or impunity* (as there is juſt cauſe) the Magiſtrate is the only *publick* Judge. 3. In regard of that *private judgment of diſcerning*, by which every *rational perſon* muſt know his own Duty, both to God and Man, and diſcern when and how far to obey Man, without diſobeying God, every ſuch *rational perſon* is a *Judge*; that is, a *Diſcerner* of what he ought to do. And Chriſt always the final Judge.

12. Yet may not the Magiſtrate invade the *Paſtoral Office* it ſelf; nor *Ordain* or *Degrade* Miniſters, (in that *Spiritual Senſe* as it is committed to Church-Guides;) nor Adminiſter the *Sacraments*, nor exerciſe the *proper power* of the *Church Keys*, which Chriſt committed to Church Officers, by ſuch *Excommunications* or *Abſolutions* as are proper to that power; nor may they *hinder the Paſtors* from the due performance of their Office, in *matter* or *manner*: Nor

forbid

forbid the *necessary Preaching* of the Gospel, or *publick worshipping* of God, by *all* or *any* of his Ministers; But are bound to *promote* it with studious diligence, as Patrons of the Church.

13. But if they *should* forbid us the *necessary Preaching* of God's Word, or *necessary assembling* for God's publick Worship, (as we must not account, those *seasons* and *circumstances necessary* which are *unnecessary*, so that which *is necessary indeed*, we must not desert, till we are disabled to perform it; seeing it is greater *Sacrilege*, if we alienate a *person consecrated to God* in so sacred an Office, than if we should alienate *consecrated Goods or Lands*; which are not so *nearly related* to a holy use. And seeing we took not up our calling upon *meer tryal* for a *time*; And seeing it is more *Cruelty in us*, to see Thousands perish in *ignorance* and *ungodliness*, while we deny them our necessary help, than to shut up the Bowels of our Compassion to them; who are in *corporal* distress: And seeing Christ's threefold charge to *Peter*, doth teach *us*, also, as *we love him to feed his Lambs*. And all that are truly called to the Ministry, may say of their duty as *Paul* of his Apostolical Works, [*Necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I Preach not the Gospel*] Joh. 21. 15, 16, 17, 18. 1 Cor. 9. 16. But there is *no absolute necessity* of our *Liberties*, *Maintenance*, *Ease* or *Lives*. And those that are indeed the Servants of God, and fear his Judgment, and look for their Reward and Felicity from him, must (with *Dan.* ch. 6. and the Apostles *Act.* 4. 18, 19. & 5. 29.) *hear God and obey him before men*: Luk. 12. 4. and *fear hell fire* more than *death*, as Christ commandeth; and love mens Salvation and Christ's Kingdom better than our lives: *Luk* 14. 26. 33. 1 *Joh.* 3. 16.

Yet must we take heed that we *over-value not* our *own labours*, and that we *pretend* not a necessity of them when there *is none*: And that we invade not the publick *Temples* or *Maintenance*, which are at the Magistrates disposal: And that we be not *too querulous* under our *own sufferings*, to make the Rulers odious to the People; nor any way stir up Sedition under pretence of *saving Souls*; nor carry on any *carnal interest* and *work* of our own, under the name of the work and interest of Christ. And as to the *places*, *seasons*, *numbers*, and other circumstances of our Ministerial Duties, they must be fitted to the Churches good, which is their end, and varied according to the variety of Cases; and we must not expect that all men and in all cases do observe the same which some must do.

14. But where we may not *actively obey*, we must either *fly to another City*, Mat. 10. 23. or *patiently suffer*, and not *resist*, Rom. 13. 3. 5. Matth. 5. 10, 11, 12. We must *not revile* when we *are reviled*, nor *curse* (no *not in our hearts*) *the Rulers of our people*, nor secretly or openly dishonour them; Because *their honour* is more necessary to the *common good* than *our* vindication is: 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. *Act.* 23. 5. *Eccl.* 10. 20. Much less may we raise any Seditions or Rebellions; or revenge or defend our selves by Wars against them, or against their truly authorized Officers: The *Christian Religion* being so far from justifying any disloyalty, that it *most strongly* obligeth us to *honour our Superiours*, upon the highest accounts; and to *give place to wrath and evil*, Rom. 12. 17. 19. 21. and to *pray for Kings and all in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life*,

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in all godliness and honesty. And though among Christians as some that bear that Name are *vicious* and *sensual*, so some are *turbulent* and *seditious*; and some that are *better* may be ensnared by the Differences of *Statesmen* and *Lawyers*; and it hath ever been Satan's grand design to raise jealousies against Christianity and Godliness in the Rulers of the Earth, and to make them believe, that the most serious and godly Christians are the worst and most dangerous Subjects; yet the very *Nature* and *Laws* of Christianity do make it most evident that the best and the entirest Christians, and the most Godly and Heavenly Men, must needs be the most loyal faithful Subjects; and he that is truest to God, will (so far as he understandeth) be truest both to King and Kingdom: And as our Obedience to the *fifth Commandment* is part of our Religion, so the promoting of all due Obedience unto our Governours, and the preventing of all Rebellions and Disloyalty, must be part of the work of all true Pastors, in their publick Teaching and their private converse.

15. All Christian Magistrates must know that their Subjects are, I. Approveable. II. Tolerable. III. Intollerable: specially as Teachers.

I. The Approveable they must encourage and maintain. II. The Tolerable they must Tolerate. III. The Intollerable they must Suppress. But if they mis-judge, God will judge them for it.

16. It is not credible that all the Patrons in *England* are such men, as God hath entrusted to choose Pastors for all mens Souls, and as will choose such as all are bound to commit the Pastoral conduct of their Souls to: And that Bishops will institute no others; nor yet impose any thing, which a good Christian may think sinful: Nor yet that all Christians are bound to venture their Souls on the conduct of any that Patrons choose, or on the practice of all that is imposed. Therefore Pastors of their own choosing should be Licensed to tolerated Churches.

1. Subscribing the Essentials of Christianity. 2. Living under Laws of Peace and Loyalty. 3. Paying their Parish Dues.

17. They whose Labours do more good, than their Mistakes and Faults do hurt, should be corrected only by such moderate Penalties as hinder them not from their Ministerial Work.

18. When all's done, Good Rulers will do good, and promote Truth, Piety and Peace, and suppress the intolerable, and restrain the envious proud tyrannical Clergy. And Bad Rulers will judge the best Men to be the worst, and take them for intolerable, and serve Satan by labouring to disable or destroy them. The God of Love and Peace, make Rulers, Teachers, and People to be Men of Love and Peace; or make us long for that World where all are such in full Perfection. *Amen*.

FINIS.